

FINAL REPORT

LETTER WRITING
MARATHON 2012

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



LETTER WRITING MARATHON 2012

FINAL REPORT

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12 cases
77 COUNTRIES
over 500,000 PEOPLE
1,913,391
ACTIONS

In December 2012, **12** cases of individuals and communities whose human rights have been violated were given huge international public attention by Amnesty International.

Activities for about two weeks around 10 December, Human Rights Day, generated **1,913,391 actions** in **77** different countries. Events took place on all scales, from small letter writing gatherings in libraries and schools, to high-impact projections of images of the individuals' faces in capital cities. At least **500,000 people** participated although the actual figure may be much higher as we do not have data from every country.

The Letter Writing Marathon is an annual global campaigning moment for Amnesty International and continues to grow each year. In 2012, **more actions than ever** before were taken. Action took place in:

Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Barbados*, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Bolivia*, Brazil, Bulgaria*, Burkina Faso, Canada (Anglophone), Canada (Francophone), Chile, Croatia, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea*, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Latvia*, Liberia*, Lithuania*, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta*, Morocco, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria*, Norway, Pakistan*, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania*, Russia, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, USA, Venezuela, Zambia*, Zimbabwe.

(* denotes countries without an official Amnesty International presence.)

SUMMARY OF IMPACT

In two cases, there has been a **positive change** and it is likely that Amnesty International's public activism during the Letter Writing marathon made a contribution to this

- In January 2013, the Chinese authorities granted **Gao Zhisheng** a visit from his family for the first time in nine months.
- **Girifna** have reported that they have received less online targeting by the authorities since the Letter Writing Marathon

In **four** cases, we received indications that our pressure has been registered by at least some of the campaign targets.

- The Vice President of Guatemala, Roxana Baldetti, announced that she had received **over 1,000 appeals** from around the world on **Maria Isabel Franco's** case, and **publicly pledged action** in support of the investigation, and more generally on the issue of violence against women in Guatemala.
- On 19 December 2012 the Mayor of Cluj in Romania publicly elaborated on the situation of the **Roma community** and presented upcoming plans to **resolve their situation**.
- Although **Ales Bialiatski** was denied all prison visits for a period of six months, his colleagues told Amnesty International that harsher methods of punishment typically used for other prisoners of conscience – such as extensions of prison sentences or isolation in punishment cells – were not applied to Ales, and that they felt this was likely **a result of the attention** his case received through the Marathon.
- In Taiwan, the Letter Writing Marathon actions for **Chiou Ho-Shun** were covered by **the national media** and resulted in a response from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Although the response defended the death sentence given to Chiou Ho-shun, it still demonstrates that this type of international action is helpful in maintaining the **spotlight** on his case and keeping the pressure on the authorities.

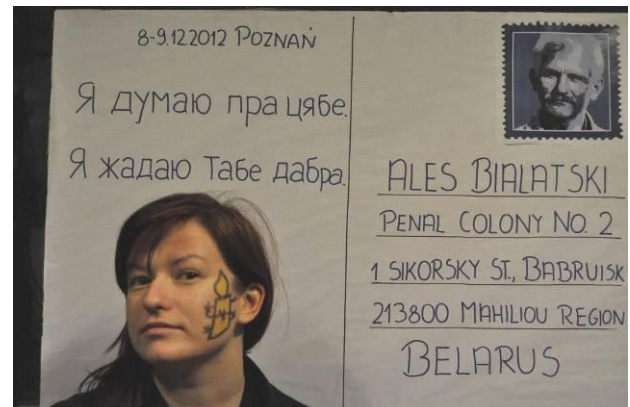
In **11** of the cases, the individuals, families and communities featured have reported a **positive psychological impact** as a result of being part of the Letter Writing Marathon, through receiving solidarity letters, as well as the packs showing what had been done on their behalf. Those who went on the **speaker tours** – the representatives from **Bodo** and **Coastei St** – also reported that as a result of their involvement, they felt empowered to **take action** on other cases and issues that Amnesty International is working on.



Solidarity cards sent to the Coastei Street families

"Over New Year we had two days of rest. And on these days I kept reading the hundreds of letters and postcards... I can sincerely say that I haven't missed out a single one of them. I felt the waves of support and participation – the flow of spiritual energy which emanated from them – with all my senses. It was an indescribable New Year... I am starting to seriously think: how I can thank all those people who support me so sincerely and warmly..."

– Ales Bialiatski



Activist from AI Poland shows her support for Ales Bialatski. The postcard reads "I am wishing you well" in Belarusian.



Gao Zhisheng appeal cards collected at AI UK.

"I saw the pack and learnt of the campaign Amnesty International has done through the Letter Writing Marathon. Wow!I found it unbelievable when I first saw the huge number; my friends helped me to take a look at this figure. After confirming the figure I have been immersed in this excitement. Thank you!"

– Geng He, wife of Gao Zhisheng

"I received the best Christmas present in three years since the loss of my husband Juan Almonte with all these cards, notes, and Christmas postcards. Thanks for keeping Juan present, for making him known in the entire world. I would like to thank all the persons who took time and shared my pain."

— Ana Montilla, wife of Juan Almonte



Photograph taken by Ana Montilla of letter sent to her from around the world



Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman's image is projected on the LED screen of the Onassis Cultural Centre building in Athens, Greece.

"One thing that gives us hope is support and solidarity from regular people. People are the only impetus for change. Government will not improve or do anything unless there is pressure from people... The amount of messages I received [from AI members and activists] gives me a lot of hope despite all the challenges."

— Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

"I am writing to thank all of you, Amnesty International and the marvellous and wonderful people who made such a kind and lovely gesture by writing to me. When I received all those cards and letters I started crying, in a mixture of happiness and missing my daughter, but I'm so grateful for so many kind messages. It makes me feel strengthened and accompanied in this struggle."

— Rosa Franco, mother of María Isabel Franco



Activists at AI Chile take action in behalf of María Isabel Franco

Narges Mohammadi's husband, Taghi Rahmani spoke to Amnesty International and thanked activists for their action, saying that both he and Narges feel very happy and warm-hearted due to the action taken, in particular the solidarity actions.



Activists from AI Canada (Francophone) shoot videos of support for GIRIFNA.

"GIRIFNA received support letters from all over the world, Thank you @amnesty #Sudan #Write4rights pic.twitter.com/MnCATIKo"

– Tweet from @Girifna

"We as a people thank all those who have nursed this initiative. We are sure that this struggle on our behalf will yield fruit gradually. We are hopeful for the best. We are encouraged. In fact, it is this kind of support that is helping us to live on". – Chief Baribor Koottee, second in command to the Bodo Paramount Ruler



Children from St Hilary's church in Mississauga, Canada with a banner they made in support of the Bodo Community.

A representative of the **Tawargha** people, from the Janzour camp in Western Libya, expressed the community's gratitude and happiness at seeing photos of actions taken by people for them around the world and feeling international support.

"Thank you very much to everyone for the letters that have been sent to the mayor, and also for the letters of solidarity that we received. We feel very much supported and we have confidence that with your support from around the world we will succeed. We do not give up because we know we have so many people that are standing by us in the fight for justice. We are really touched to know that people from all over the world are thinking about us and have written to us. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts."

- Claudia Greta, former Coastei St community



Stencil of Chiou Ho-Shun created by AI Thailand.

"On the afternoon of January 23rd, I received your letters wishing me well. I was so happy to receive them! Thank you so much for your concern. I have also recently received letters and cards of support from friends around the world. I am very touched!...The sincere love that every friend has given to me gives me a bit of strength, making my heart feel warm. This life of mine has never experienced this before, so I truly treasure this blessing. I hope more friends are able to preserve the fairness and justice of the judicial system. Together we will make history towards a common cause, thank you everyone!" – Chiou Ho-Shun

In four of the cases, Amnesty International judges that pressure applied through the individuals' cases has a **positive impact** for the ongoing thematic campaigns related to the cases.

Pressure applied for the **Bodo community** has added to a growing openness by the Minister of Finance to address the issue of oil spills in the Niger Delta, and has engaged a French Member of Parliament (MP) more actively on the issue.

The increased spotlight on the case of **Hussein Almerfedi** helped to raise the profile of **Guantánamo detainees** at a time when they have somewhat fallen under the radar on the international stage.

In AI's assessment, the high profile of the campaign for **Ales Bialiatski** has built **confidence and trust** among other human rights organizations in the value of AI's work in Belarus.

There has been some recognition of the plight of the **Tawargha** people by the Libyan authorities. In February 2013, the Deputy Prime Minister Awad Barasi held a meeting with representatives from several ministries to discuss the issue of internally displaced people and how to ensure they are able to return to their homes.

2. INTRODUCTION

Started in 2001 by Amnesty International Poland, the Letter Writing Marathon (LWM) has grown ever since to become a huge moment of global public activism in Amnesty International's calendar. In 2012 the LWM followed the same theme: a burst of pressure around 10 December, Human Rights Day, on behalf of a selection of individuals or communities at risk of human rights abuses. **In 2012 almost 2 million actions were taken in 77 countries around the world – more actions than ever before!**

At any given time the Amnesty International movement will work to achieve change for hundreds of individuals at risk of abuse. How do we decide which cases to focus on? The cases are selected because they have the potential to benefit from the mobilisation of thousands of people taking action at that particular time. This could be because the Marathon coincides with a particular political event such as an upcoming debate on the passing of a relevant bill (as in the Bodo Community case), or perhaps a recent change in government (as in the case of Juan Almonte Herrera). A case could also feature because there has already been substantial groundwork put in place and its position in the Marathon would build pressure at an important time (as with the Coastei Street Roma community). Campaigns for individuals are often about more than those named: the violations they have suffered may be representative of the plight of others in their country. Here, pressure on their case could lead to success not just in their case, but for others in similar situations (as is hoped with Ales Bialiatski's case).

The LWM has developed into a major opportunity for Amnesty International to reach out to new supporters. In fact, more than 65% of Sections/structures surveyed identified reaching new audiences as their primary LWM growth/mobilisation objective. The Marathon is also an excellent way to strengthen engagement with existing supporters, as it is a moment to reaffirm the value of being part of a global movement that can really bring about change.

As new people are introduced to Amnesty International's work through the LWM, cases are chosen to represent the breadth of the campaigns in terms of geography, theme, and gender focus. For example in 2012 we featured a man facing the death penalty in Asia; families at risk of eviction in Europe; the rape and murder of a 15-year-old girl in Latin America; and a community fighting for corporate accountability in Africa.

As the following pages of this report show, different Amnesty International national offices (Sections/structures) chose to work on various combinations of individuals and communities. Most Sections/structures (S/s) chose cases from the group of 12 selected for the global LWM; however, some chose additional cases. They made these choices to maximise the chance of impact for the individuals – for example, sometimes pressure from a specific country is particularly pertinent and sometimes the burst of pressure generated by the LWM is most effective when there is already a groundswell of awareness. Likewise, Sections/structures also chose which cases to feature based on the global appeal of a case. For example Amnesty International Brazil, in its first-ever Marathon, selected two Brazilian cases. Despite not yet having any local groups or a network of activists, they achieved excellent national media coverage and high participation in local events that ran in five different cities. Amnesty International Benin worked on the same cases as Amnesty International France, sharing resources such as an online platform to help generate activism during the Marathon. Thus while 1,438,427 actions were taken on behalf of the 12 cases featured in this report, there were 1,913,391 actions taken overall.

Each year, actions take place in more and more countries. 2012 was the third year that events took place in countries without an official Amnesty International presence. International supporters of Amnesty International, whose relationship with the organisation has been built online, took the LWM “offline” and into their communities; activists from Barbados, Bolivia, Cyprus, Guinea, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Malta, Nigeria, Pakistan, Romania and Zambia took part in 2012.

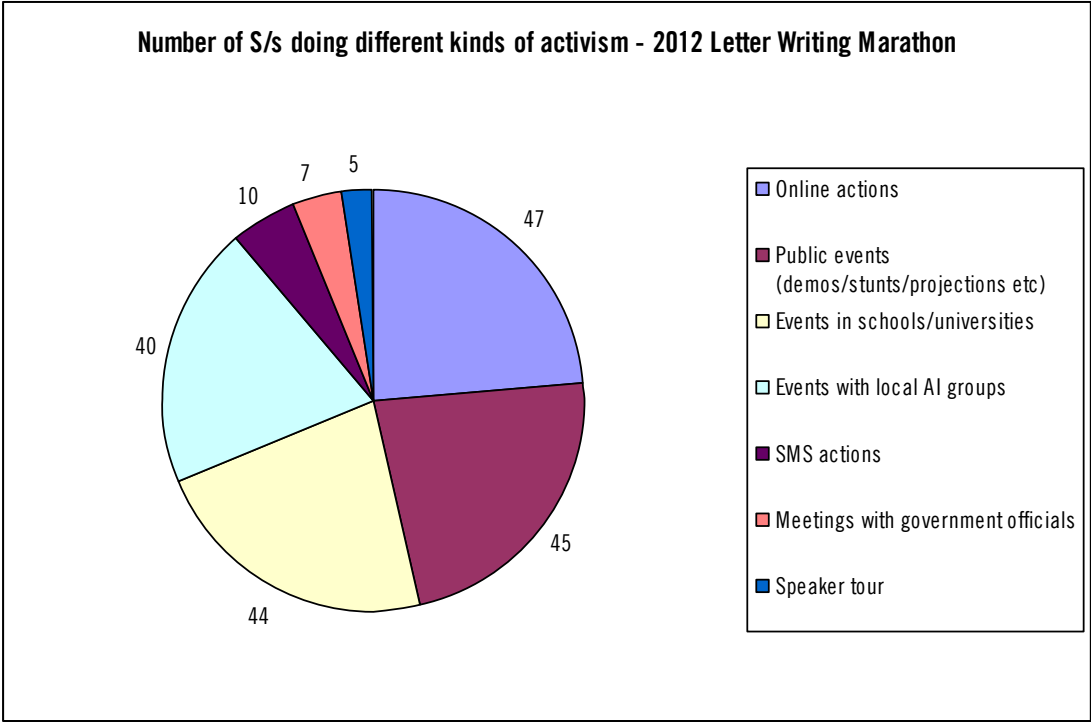
While the LWM's primary objective is to change lives through mass action, Amnesty International and S/s tailor their activism to suit their regions and membership. In this report, the word “action” can cover a number of different activities, from the traditional letter to online and SMS petitions. Some S/s collected photographs and drawings expressing solidarity to be sent on; others sent in video messages.

Whatever their format, actions were either targeting authorities in a country or were a ‘solidarity action’. An action targeting an authority, such as the Supreme Leader of Iran in the case of Narges Mohammadi, called for concrete

action, such as an investigation or immediate release. Solidarity actions, such as those sent to the mother of María Isabel Franco, were intended to give hope and remind the individual or their families that they are not alone.

Actions such as names on a petition or SMS, letters or photographs, were sent in a variety of ways. Some were sent directly to the recipient; others were gathered by groups and sent in small packets, or collated by Sections/structures and sent in larger packets. Names gathered electronically on petitions and by SMS were printed out and sent with a covering letter to the target. Solidarity actions reached their beneficiaries in a number of ways. Some were sent directly, as in the case of Ales Bialiatski, who received thousands of letters in prison. In other cases they were delivered via an intermediary –the letters and cards for the Roma families of Coastei Street were taken directly to the community by campaigners at the International Secretariat (IS) in London.

Every year the activities and events designed to generate action are diverse, and 2012 proved no exception. Many of them were public-facing, aiming to push the LWM into the public domain. For example, in Paraguay and Nepal activists took part in bike rides and collected signatures along the way. In Toronto, the world-famous CN Tower was lit up Amnesty bright yellow. In Chile, Portugal, and Uruguay, activists collected signatures at music concerts. Activism that included participation from the individuals themselves proved particularly effective in creating change in the lives of the individuals, reaching new audiences, and deepening engagement with existing audiences. In 2012, speaker tours with members of the Bodo Community were organised in France and with members of the Coastei Street families in Poland. Below is a chart showing the different kinds of actions coordinated by sections; some sections did more than one kind of course.



This report comprises two main sections. In the first, any impacts and developments in the lives of the individuals are explained. This information has been gathered through conversations between country specialists at the IS of Amnesty International and the individuals themselves, or their representatives. Other sources of information are media, lobby meetings, and communications with local partners. To facilitate conversations with the individuals and their representatives, we provided a short document to each individual that showed photos of action taken on their behalf around the world, in order to help them understand what had happened, before they said how they felt about the action.

The second part of the report details the activities that took place around the world. We have highlighted some of the particularly inspiring or popular action ideas. We gathered the information for this section through an online survey completed by participating Sections/structures and international volunteers.

3. IDEAS FOR 2013

In 2012, there were many fantastic ideas – here are some of the best!

It's essential to **communicate** with your existing audiences well in advance of the Letter Writing Marathon and mobilise them around it if you want to deepen their engagement. Be **CLEAR** about the objectives from the start and use key messages in all your communications.



SPEAKER TOURS are a great way to deepen the engagement of new audiences and keep them involved in the campaign in the long-term. The experience can be very empowering for speakers and their communities as well – both the Coastei Street and Bodo representatives spoke of this following their tours.

It is important that the **voices** of the individuals themselves come through in the campaigns. You can achieve this by using lots of quotes, images, and footage, especially if speaker tours are not possible. There are many **creative** ways to use these materials.

Online tools and platforms are great for gaining new audiences. They can be used to share materials but also to host online actions (such as petitions, letters and solidarity actions). **Visualisation tools** like a map showing support can be helpful for building online communities.

Social networks are great ways to create **online communities** and build momentum in the run-up to the Marathon.

Celebrities/high-profile individuals can be very influential in spreading the message to their followers on social media.

It can very useful to work with **media** and gain their attention – presenting profiles of individuals on behalf of whom we are campaigning, organising meeting with media could be helpful for reaching new audiences.

Follow-up after the Marathon is crucial for keeping activists engaged in the longer term. You can prepare a follow-up plan in advance and follow up with good news, quotes from the individuals or new actions.

The Letter Writing Marathon provides a great opportunity for engaging with **youth** – for example through collaboration with schools, youth networks, and preparing materials targeting youth audiences.

To reach new audiences, S/s organised some additional activities including:

- **Concerts**
- **Film screenings**
- **Exhibitions**
- **Sport activities – including running, cycling, swimming, sailing**
- **Lantern making**
- **Workshops**
- **Floating lanterns down a river**

4. IMPACTS AND DEVELOPMENTS FOR THE INDIVIDUALS

ALES BIALIATSKI BELARUS

Ales Bialiatski, a prominent human rights defender and Chairman of Human Rights Centre Viasna in Belarus, has been imprisoned since November 2011. Amnesty International considers him a prisoner of conscience.

On 13 February 2013, the administration of Penal Colony #2 in Babruisk, where Ales Bialiatski is serving his sentence, confirmed that Ales Bialiatski has been deprived of all visits for a period of six months. According to his sentence, he is usually entitled to three short meetings and two long meetings a year.

Amnesty International talked to Ales Bialiatski's colleague, Valentin Stefanovich from Viasna, about the effects that active international campaigning might have had on the decision of the penal colony administration to deny visits to Ales Bialiatski. Valentin Stefanovich said that this decision is common practice towards all prisoners of conscience in Belarus and that harsher methods of punishment typically used for other prisoners of conscience – such as extensions of prison sentences, isolation in punishment cells – were not applied to Ales, perhaps a result of the attention his case received through the Marathon. Valentin Stefanovich added that the authorities understand the need to release Ales Bialiatski in the near future, but that they really want Ales Bialiatski to write a request for a pardon, and that will help the authorities "save face". On multiple occasions Amnesty International has raised its concern that prisoners of conscience are often harassed and intimidated in prisons and penal colonies where they are serving their sentences, often in order to force them to confess or apply for pardons. If they refuse, prisoners are faced with even harsher treatment and may face further criminal charges.

Valentin Stefanovich emphasized that Amnesty International should continue its campaigning activities on behalf of Ales Bialiatski, and that international solidarity is very important for Ales in prison, particularly now that he is denied of all the meetings with his family.

“Ales personally evaluated the Marathon as exclusively positive. In his letters he several times asked me to thank Amnesty. For him it was very important. He wrote about postcards and described them; they were an outlet for him there. I say this without exaggeration. I know it for sure from his letters. You have to understand and take into account that the prison administration isolated him from other prisoners. Under the threat of the pressure they are afraid to talk to him. He is there among men, but he is alone! And he wrote me that he spent his 50 birthday [in September 2012] alone among letters and postcards.”

Indeed, throughout January 2013, Ales Bialiatski wrote letters to his colleagues in Viasna, which were then published on the organization's website. In these letters he repeatedly referred to the Letter Writing Marathon actions and even shared photos of the drawings and letters he received. He wrote that on some days he received over 500 letters a day, and that he gets more mail than the other prisoners combined.

“I have been covered with an avalanche of letters and postcards, congratulations as well as the solidarity actions...I am very grateful to all the people who write to me!... in each of [the letters] you can see the national character of those who sent them. But what they all have in common is sympathy.

“Over New Year we had two days of rest. And on these days I kept reading the hundreds of letters and postcards... I can sincerely say that I haven't missed out a single one of them. I felt the waves of support and participation - the flow of spiritual energy which emanated from them - with all my senses. It was an indescribable New Year... I am

starting to seriously think: how I can thank all those people who support me so sincerely and warmly...

"Such international support embarrasses me...I do not think that I deserve it. The only excuse that reassures me is that these people do not just support me personally, but are expressing their protest against the systematic violations of human rights. It is a clear and simple message to all Belarusians."

Following a visit on 20 December 2012, Ales' Bialiatski's wife, Natalia Pinchuk, said to Amnesty International:

"Ales looks cheerful, he is not complaining about anything. Currently on Viasna's website you can read about letters he received and thanks everyone. Thank you very much for everything, without the support that you organize it would be much harder for Ales and other prisoners to survive the imprisonment. Letters have helped and continue to help."

Another important outcome of the Letter Writing Marathon is that, in Amnesty International's assessment, the high profile of the campaign for Ales has built confidence and trust among other human rights organizations in the value of Amnesty's work in Belarus.

A total of 104,955 actions were taken in 39 countries around the world for Ales. A pack with photos of all the actions taken for Ales around the world was particularly important in this respect. The photos were sent to Viasna, then published by Ales's colleagues on the [website](#), and soon picked up by local independent media. The images of mass activism and news that over 100,000 actions were taken for Ales around the world seem to have inspired greater confidence among local human rights organizations that Amnesty International is engaging in the Belarusian situation and that real action is being taken. This strengthened engagement between Amnesty International and local human rights activists has also been encouraged by the particular way in which this Letter Writing Marathon campaign developed, with close collaboration between Amnesty International, Ales, and his colleagues: from Viasna posting photos of the letters Ales received, to Amnesty International interviewing his friends and Viasna colleagues posting photos of activists around the world. Indeed Valentin Stefanovich mentioned that following the Marathon, Viasna would like to be more involved in Amnesty International's other campaigns related to Belarus: *"This would be a very, very nice if we were able to publish more about these actions. For our part we are ready to actively participate in such actions - to be interviewed and tell all the information about what is happening to us and other prisoners of conscience in the country, in all forms - in writing, on a video and so on."*

"I think that the Letter Writing Marathon helped Ales's to feel confident that he has not been forgotten and that thousands of eyes are looking at him and supporting him. This is very important there. In addition it is very important to demonstrate to the administration of the prison colony, that the world is watching how they treat Ales. Who knows, maybe the marathon did not give them a chance to apply in respect to Ales other methods of pressure, which are used for other political prisoners --- replacement of a prison regime with stricter regime, extension of the prison sentence, isolation in punishment cells, etc. And this marathon also gave [us Ales's colleagues from Viasna] strength and hope that we will soon see our friend and colleague."
— Valentin Stefanovich

GAO ZHISHENG

CHINA

Gao Zhisheng is one of China's most respected human rights lawyers. He has been subjected to enforced disappearance, torture, illegal house arrest and detention since 2006 as a result of his human rights activities and is currently being held in Shaya county prison in northwest China.

Family members were able to visit Gao Zhisheng in prison on 12 January 2013. This was the first time a prison visit was granted in nine months. The visit was tightly controlled – Gao Zhisheng's brother and father-in-law were only allowed to meet with him for half an hour, and were told that they could not ask any questions about Gao Zhisheng's treatment, any case details or ask if he has received any letters in prison. The family were allowed to send him 600 Yuan (USD 96) but not any clothes or necessities. He looked fine physically and appeared clear-minded. Gao Zhisheng did not speak or ask much about the family but simply asked that his wife Geng He take good care of the children and not worry too much about him in the prison.

While it is difficult to know exactly what led to the prison visit being granted, the huge amount of action generated by the Letter Writing Marathon may have contributed, and has definitely provided a great deal of support and solidarity with his family. A total of 167,748 actions were taken in 54 countries around the world. Gao Zhisheng's wife passed the following message to Amnesty activists:

"Following a Letter Writing Marathon organized by Amnesty International at the end of last year and actions from the international community, the family of the Gao Zhisheng was granted a second prison visit on 12 January of this year. It is a small improvement, but it could not be achieved without the international community's concerns and the effort and support from the membership of Amnesty International, for which my family and I feel most grateful. I hope Amnesty International will continue to promote this activity, allowing more people to come to know my husband's situation, until he gains his freedom."

Geng He also sent the following message after receiving the pack of information about the Letter Writing Marathon activities that took place around the world, including the total number of actions:

"I saw the pack and learnt of the campaign AI has done through the letter writing marathon. Wow! ... I found it unbelievable when I first saw the huge number; my friends helped me to take a look at this figure. After confirming the figure I have been immersed in this excitement. Thank you!"

It is very difficult to assess Amnesty's specific impact on Gao Zhisheng's case, as there are also many others working for his release including other NGOs and diplomats. However, it is also hoped that the enormous number of letters that were sent to the prison and the Premier will have improved his treatment in prison, and will let the authorities know that people who are detained in remote areas (i.e. in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwest China) will not necessarily be forgotten.

Gao Zhisheng has been subjected to enforced disappearance, torture, illegal house arrest and detention since 2006 as a result of his human rights activities. There is a risk that international attention will decrease over time, so the focus on his case as a result of the Letter Writing Marathon was important in helping maintain momentum in the campaign for his release. In addition, we will try to share information and photos of the activities that happened around the world for Gao Zhisheng with Chinese-speaking communities, by promoting a slideshow on Amnesty International's new Chinese-language website. It is hoped this will show solidarity with activists in China and also demonstrate more widely the types of campaigning actions that Amnesty organises.

JUAN ALMONTE HERRERA

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

On 28 September 2009, Juan Almonte Herrera disappeared after witnesses saw him being detained by police officers. Since then, the authorities have failed to fully investigate his fate and whereabouts and his family members have reported being watched by police. The authorities have not provided protection for the family.

On 1 February 2013, the lawyer working on Juan Almonte Herrera's case wrote to Amnesty International to say that there was a possible opportunity for movement in the case, the first in a long while. He said that the newly created Human Rights Unit in the Office of the Attorney General had indicated to him that the case was seen as emblematic, well-publicised and that there was scope for bringing the case forward, given the level of international pressure the case had received. Indeed, although the authorities have not publicly acknowledged the letters received, in meetings with both Amnesty International and the lawyer they have shown their awareness of the campaign. According to Juan Almonte's lawyer, the campaign has caused alarm among the authorities and has strengthened the confidence of Juan's family members who are no longer feeling alone in their claims against the State.

Ana Montilla, Juan Almonte's wife, travelled to Puerto Rico during the 2012 Writing Marathon and took part in Amnesty International Puerto Rico's activities, which included a visit to the Dominican consulate. Ana Montilla also undertook media work in Puerto Rico. She appeared on a half-hour special on [MásTV Puerto Rico](#) and some print coverage was achieved in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, including on the online news sites [El Portal](#), [Acento](#), [Expreso Latino](#) as well in the US press, in the New York newspaper [Metro](#). In total, some 43,395 actions were taken in 23 countries around the world for Juan Almonte.

Ana Montilla told Amnesty International that she had heard that officials from the Attorney General's Office and the Police Department were "completely stunned" by the international show of support for the case and that they were unsure of how to deal with the case because of the international pressure. She feels that they know they are now under international scrutiny and are extremely cautious about the next steps to take in the case.

Following her participation in the Letter Writing Marathon, Ana Montilla wrote to express her happiness at the mobilisation of activists around her husband's case. She told Amnesty International that she had counted over 3,100 letters and still had two more boxes to open, as well as more at the post office. Her main message was that she felt very glad that the campaign had made the case known internationally and that this had helped to pressure the Dominican authorities.

"I had never imagined that my husband's case would become known so widely; that people who live in such far away places would take the time to write for Juan. This solidarity touched me very much. I was also very moved by the solidarity that was shown to us [his family]. I was left speechless. I never thought that people from parts of the world that I barely know would show their solidarity with us. It feels very positive to me that the campaign made the case around the world.

"[The LWM campaign has] been a source of incredible moral support. It's given me strength to continue fighting. It's given me the strength to continue to denounce injustice. It's given me tremendous courage; to not give up. I have been left without words."

Ana Montilla asked the IS Caribbean team for email addresses of some different sections in order to send her thanks. As of March 2013, Ana is looking into using all the letters she received in some way that would bring additional pressure to bear on the authorities. She has plans to travel to Al Spain to work with local groups later in the year and will publicly ask for an official statement following the Letter Writing Marathon.

AZZA HILAL AHMAD SULEIMAN

EGYPT

Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman is fighting for justice after Egyptian soldiers attacked her. The vicious attack, carried out while the army was suppressing a protest in December 2011, left her with a fractured skull and she now suffers from memory problems.

More than a year after she was attacked by soldiers, Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman is still waiting for truth and justice. She has not received new information about any investigation into her attack by the Public Prosecutor. Both the army and security forces continue to benefit from near-total impunity for human rights violations, including for the unnecessary and excessive use of force against protesters during the uprising and under military rule. Only three low-ranking members of the army have been sentenced for human rights abuses against protesters. Indeed in the broader context of the crisis in Egypt, individual cases are receiving ever less attention from the authorities and for this reason sustained campaigning for individuals remains very important.

Despite the seeming lack of progress on her case, Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman would like to say thank you to Amnesty International activists around the world for their support and solidarity. She said she received so many letters during the Letter Writing Marathon that the Post Office was surprised, and she had to carry them all home in big bags. She told us:

"I only have faith in people, whether in Egypt or abroad, to achieve change... We have suffered a lot in the past two years and faced a lot: teargas, shotgun pellets, beatings, sleeping in the cold outside... One thing that gives us hope is support and solidarity from regular people. People are the only impetus for change. Government will not improve or do anything unless there is pressure from people... The amount of messages I received [from Amnesty International members and activists] gives me a lot of hope despite all the challenges."

In total over 172,263 actions were taken in 51 countries on behalf of Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman.



Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman, surrounded by letters of solidarity she received from Amnesty International members as part of the Letter Writing Marathon 2012

MARIA ISABEL FRANCO

GUATEMALA

María Isabel Franco was 15 years old when she was raped and brutally killed in 2001. Since María's death her mother Rosa has been fighting for justice, despite receiving death threats from unknown people on several occasions.

On 9 January 2013, the Guatemalan Vice President Roxana Baldetti announced that she had received over 1,000 appeals from around the world on María Isabel Franco's case, and pledged action in support of the investigation, and more generally on the issue of violence against women in Guatemala. She made the announcement on the front page of the [Vice Presidential website](#) where she also created a [link to information on María Isabel's case](#). She also commented on the case on the [Vice-presidential Facebook page](#).

Referring specifically to María's case, the Vice President stated that the case is still under investigation and that specific details cannot be disclosed because of confidentiality, although she did summarise some of the actions that have been taken to date. These included:



- The recent establishment of a **Special Cabinet for Women** (Gabinete Específico de la Mujer), a new government forum for different ministries and agencies. The Cabinet began operating in November 2012 and is in charge of setting and implementing policies on women's rights
- Since December 2012 the Public Prosecutor's has a **Department of Investigation for Sexual Violence**
- There are also plans to create adequate **facilities to attend victims of sexual violence** in hospitals across the country.

Photo posted by the Office of the Vice President of Guatemala showing the stacks of letters she received from Amnesty International activists

Amnesty International's analysis is that the Letter Writing Marathon had a real impact in raising the case and the wider issue directly with the Vice President, and has opened a useful channel of communication with the government to bring about change in the way the authorities deal with violence against women. In total, 87,551 actions were taken in 35 countries around the world.

NARGES MOHAMMADI

IRAN

Narges Mohammadi, Executive Chairperson of the Centre for Human Rights Defenders in Tehran, has been sentenced to six years' imprisonment. She was granted temporary medical leave in July 2012.

In July 2012, before the start of the Letter Writing Marathon, Narges Mohammadi was released on temporary medical leave. At the time, she resided in Qazvin, southwest of Tehran, with her family. They helped care for her and her young twins Ali (m) and Kiana (f).

It is difficult to gauge whether appeals to Iran's Supreme Leader have had any direct impact on Narges Mohammadi's situation.

However, we believe that the 157,808 appeals from 46 countries on her behalf have provided some protection for her and it is a success that to date she has not been returned to prison. Narges Mohammadi has now returned to her Tehran flat with the twins, and is receiving medical treatment for her health problems, and as such is physically in a better shape than before and is beginning to re-establish some normality in her daily life.

Her husband, Taghi Rahmani who now resides outside Iran, spoke to Amnesty International and thanked activists for their action, saying that both he and Narges feel very happy and heart-warmed due to the action taken, in particular the solidarity actions, of which they received many boxes, including drawings, cards and letters. Below is his letter:

*To Amnesty International
With Thanks and Respect*

With greetings and best wishes for Amnesty International in its path to spread human equality to all races, religions and beliefs. The name of Narges Mohammadi was mentioned in your annual 2012 ceremony [Letter Writing Marathon], as human right's activist. Your warm support of my wife, Narges Mohammadi, which created a path for thousands of others, showed that your organization has raised the voice of human rights even louder all over the world. Such endeavours encourage all human rights activists in the world to continue their hard but righteous and humane goals.

During the Amnesty International events and ceremonies around the world, hundreds of supportive letters addressed to Narges, Ali and Kiana reached us and thousands spoke of them in their gatherings. They were all heart warming and showed that our family is supported by a lot of people around the world. Undoubtedly we are grateful for this support. We thank you for your support and hope that human rights, all over the world, are attainable for all. However, in my homeland, Iran, the important need for us is to be able to get permission to form civil society organizations in order to attain more and better freedoms because civil rights can lead to freedom of speech and beliefs. The human rights activists in Iran strive for this path.

In the hope we can achieve this demand in Iran.

Taghi Rahmani

THE TAWARGHA PEOPLE

LIBYA

In August 2011, the Libyan town of Tawargha was attacked by anti-Gaddafi militia fighters from nearby Misratah. 30,000 inhabitants fled and are now scattered across Libya, living in poorly resourced camps and in constant fear of ongoing attacks by militias who have vowed that the people of Tawargha will never be allowed to return.

During the Letter Writing Marathon, some 92,564 appeals were taken in 30 countries around the world. Since then, there has been some recognition of the plight of the displaced people of Tawargha by the Libyan authorities. In February 2013, the Deputy Prime Minister Awad Barasi held a meeting with representatives from several ministries including the Ministry of Justice and Interior to discuss the issue of internally displaced people and how to ensure they are able to return to their homes. The meeting reportedly concluded with a set of recommendations, including enacting the Social Justice Law, improving efforts for national reconciliation, improving the living conditions of internally displaced people and ensuring they are able to return to their. The Libyan authorities also recently established a Displaced Persons Affairs office under the authority of the Prime Minister.

Although the community continues to face harassment and attacks by militias on a regular basis and has still not been able to go back, they have been organising demonstrations and continue their struggle, with the aim of returning in the near future.

A representative of the community, from the Janzour camp in Western Libya, expressed the community's gratitude and happiness at seeing photos of actions taken by people for them around the world and feeling international support. They claim however that they have yet to see any action taken on their behalf by the Libyan authorities in practice. They underlined their wish for continued support.



An activist in Canada shows her support for The Tawargha People.

BODO COMMUNITY

NIGERIA

For several hundred years, the people of Bodo in the Niger Delta have made a living from fishing and farming, until 2008, when a breach in a Shell oil pipeline polluted the land and water around Bodo. The oil destroyed people's livelihoods and devastated the environment, while two more spills pushed the people deeper into poverty and ill-health. Over four years later, the land and water remain polluted and unproductive.

Since December 2012, a French MP who had become concerned about the case through the Letter Writing Marathon has expressed interest in visiting the Bodo community, wanting to show solidarity with the people of Bodo, and to raise awareness of their plight and the wider issue of oil pollution in the Niger Delta.

Members of the Bodo community and local partners have expressed that the overwhelming number of postcards and letters they received during and since the Letter Writing Marathon has given them renewed encouragement to continue their struggle, confident in the gaze of the international community. In total 132,131 actions were taken in 41 countries around the world. The letters have created a profound positive impact - the Bodo people feel happy receiving these messages of hope.

"We as a people thank all those who have nursed this initiative. We are sure that this struggle on our behalf will yield fruit gradually. We are hopeful for the best. We are encouraged. In fact, it is this kind of support that is helping us to live on". - Chief Baribor Koottee, second in command to the Bodo Paramount Ruler



David and Christian from the Bodo community show their solidarity with the Coastei street families

Two community representatives, Pastor Christian Lekova and David Vareba of the Centre for Environment Human Rights and Development, travelled to France in December 2012 to participate in a speaker's tour. Community members back in Bodo followed their trip with enthusiasm: many commented that despite limited access to news media or internet they listened to the French radio interviews. They were equally aware of other LWM outputs - a song written by the French band, Milk, Coffee and Sugar, in support of the community became the talk of the town, and the video and printed materials such as the stamp images gave many community members a real sense of hope.

For the Pastor, the trip to France changed his perception of activism. He has since expressed his desire to become

an international member of Amnesty International and has remained in touch with French activists since returning to Nigeria. Likewise David Vareba expressed how much he enjoyed meeting with local activists and suggested that *"there should be visits to more local groups during future speaker's tours."*

Similarly, many people from across the community have wanted to become even more active following their involvement in the Letter Writing Marathon. Many commented that they are interested in showing solidarity with other people or communities whose rights have been violated in other parts of the world.

However, the Bodo community was disappointed as they had mistakenly understood that signatures could only be collected online and felt that this limited their ability to support others. Another lesson learned about creating clear expectations is that although people expressed that they felt consoled by the show of international support, they believed that more tangible assistance from Europe would be on the way. Many said that they wanted more tangible assistance: medical relief materials and jobs. There was some expectation of relief and/or financial aid by those who are not really aware of Amnesty International and are used to other development organisations in the region. However, this was not an issue with those who knew Amnesty International.

Amnesty International's analysis is that the Letter Writing Marathon action for the Bodo community, and in particular the international attention, has contributed to keeping the case of the Bodo community – and more broadly, the issue of oil pollution in the Niger Delta – high on the government's agenda. Since the Marathon, AI has been in contact with the office of the Minister of Finance, an influential minister who is responsible for distribution of funds from oil production in the Niger Delta. The Minister of Finance met with Amnesty International's Secretary General during a High Level Mission to Nigeria in October 2012, although it seems that she places more emphasis on the oil companies being held responsible for oil pollution in the Niger Delta than the Nigerian government. Furthermore, a judgment against Shell in the Netherlands in January 2013 once again raised the issue of oil pollution in the Niger Delta internationally and was covered extensively by local media, adding to national awareness on the issue.

"I think this solidarity, I would say, is the highest we have had...assisting the Bodo people to actually have a better situation in the disaster which they had. I am so impressed by first of all, Amnesty International organizing this, for inviting us...My experience of the Letter Writing Marathon in France and the speakers' tour was the best campaign activity I have ever attended. The activities were good; people were passionate and keen to assist having heard of the Bodo story." - David Vareba



Activists in Thailand take action for the Bodo Community.

COASTEI STREET COMMUNITY

ROMANIA

On 17 December 2010, around 350 people (76 families), the majority Roma, were forcibly evicted by local authorities from the centre of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. 40 families were re-located in inadequate housing on the outskirts of the city, close to the city's garbage dump and a former chemical waste dump. Thirty-six of the families were not offered any alternative housing, and so were effectively made homeless. 29 families built improvised homes and live in daily fear of eviction.

Although the authorities have not acknowledged receiving the letters sent by activists within the LWM and as part of the campaign started by AI on the case in April 2012, and indeed made efforts not to engage with a series of public events organised to commemorate the second anniversary of the forced eviction in December 2012, Amnesty International's analysis is that their actions show that they have felt the pressure generated by sustained international campaigning and activism. 92,722 actions were taken in 32 countries around the world on behalf of the community. On 19 December 2012 the Mayor of Cluj - formerly the Prime Minister of Romania and as such likely more sensitive to the implications of international pressure - publicly elaborated on the situation of the Roma community and presented upcoming plans to resolve the situation during a media interview. He stated that plans will target desegregation of Roma children and work towards social inclusion in the metropolitan area by ensuring social housing for Roma. He also outlined plans to set up a social centre for Roma inclusion and build a 'micro business incubator' in the Pata Rat area of the city, designed to support the successful development of small companies through support, resources and services, and where people residing in the area can work. As of March 2013, however, there has been little further communication on the development of these plans and their inclusion in broader municipal plans or budget, the municipality only reiterating that they need the support of the Ministry of



Regional Development. On the contrary, during a public municipal meeting in March 2013, the Mayor made an enthusiastic declaration that he had been approached by the Ministry of Regional Development with a proposal for a partnership for container housing, similar to a project that AI has criticised in the past as inadequate housing (AI raised concerns on the Henri Coanda project in Constanta in the latest report, *Unsafe foundations* published in May 2012) <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR39/002/2012/en>

On the contrary, during a public municipal meeting in March 2013, the Mayor made an enthusiastic declaration that he had been approached by the Ministry of Regional Development with a proposal for a partnership for container housing, similar to a project that AI has criticised in the past as inadequate housing (AI raised concerns on the Henri Coanda project in Constanta in the latest report, *Unsafe foundations* published in May 2012) <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR39/002/2012/en>

In a public meeting on 7 March 2012, the Mayor expressed his support for the case of the Romani families forcibly evicted in December 2010. The analysis by local partners is that the pressure created by the Letter Writing Marathon and at-large AI campaigning on the case, contributed to this outcome by bringing a spotlight to the issue. Other factors also played a role, including United Nations Development Programme's technical assistance, local pressure from partners, protests, lobbying and advocacy. In addition to the previously outlined projects, the Mayor promised some other new measures, including a medical care unit in Pata Rat and financial support for after-school programs at schools attended by children from Pata Rat. To date, however, no further details have been made public or communicated to the community.

An important outcome of the Letter Writing Marathon is the increase in people's sense of being supported, and their empowerment through this. During the Letter Writing Marathon, community members as well as Amnesty International, partner organizations, and local and international activists and artists, held a series of events in Cluj to mark the two-year commemoration of the forced eviction of the Roma community from Coastei Street. Many of the 2,000 solidarity cards already received by the community were projected onto the walls of the City Hall during the actions. 200 people created a human chain and marched in front of the municipality holding Write for Rights lanterns and an exhibition was put on as well as a public debate. All of the actions were covered extensively in local and national media. Of those who directly participated in the events, many have said that they felt this new sense of empowerment very strongly.

"With the support from so many people from around the world, we remain strong, we remain hopeful... We will not give up. Our children have a right to a future. We will continue our fight against injustice, and once our case is resolved we will help others around the world to fight their injustice... [The events in December] were very important. People felt they are not alone. They saw for themselves that people do get involved. That you help us and in any kind of problem that we have, we can tell you and you can give us advice to help us move on." - Claudia Greta

The two members of the community, Claudia and Ernest, who travelled to Poland and participated in Amnesty International Poland's 24-hour Marathon, felt particularly empowered as a result of meeting activists, media, and those who came to write letters on their behalf. They told Amnesty International that the experience made them want to take action for others around the world, in many different situations.

"That trip made a big impression on me. Children, elderly people, they all got involved. They've been continuously writing letters - not only for us - but for all people from all countries going through a similar situation as us. It's had a huge impact on me." - Claudia Greta

In total, over 3,000 solidarity letters were received and will be shared with the community in an event in May 2013 and IS campaigners will explore together with the community and the local partners ways in which they could be used to generate even more pressure on the authorities. Members of the community did mention that they really liked the materials, especially the lanterns and the stamp images, which Claudia has stuck to furniture in her room.

"Thank you very much to everyone for the letters that have been sent to the mayor, and also for the letters of solidarity that we received. We feel very much supported and we have confidence that with your support from around the world we will succeed. We do not give up because we know we have so many people that are standing by us in the fight for justice. We are really touched to know that people from all over the world are thinking about us and have written to us. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts." - Claudia Greta



Claudia Greta, with her son.

GIRIFNA

SUDAN

Girifna is a Sudanese youth group calling for non-violent resistance to the government in Sudan. Its members have been targeted by the authorities, including by being arbitrarily arrested, detained, tortured and sexually assaulted. Despite this attempt to silence them, Girifna continue to distribute information and organize activities, including peaceful protests calling for the respect and protection of human rights in Sudan.

The situation in Sudan has been very difficult for Girifna members since August 2012, when a new wave of repression and mass arrests forced the most prominent members to leave the country or go underground.

Girifna told Amnesty International that they feel that the pressure created by the inclusion of their case in the LWM has definitely been felt by the authorities, who they feel are now using a different approach with them. For example, Girifna used to receive a huge number of instant ‘spam’ type negative comments on every post they made online. Since the LWM, they receive less negative comments on their posts. However they believe that the authorities may be changing their strategy. A recent pro-government article in a best-selling newspaper stated that Girifna should be banned online – that it is “worse than pornography”.

However, Girifna told Amnesty International that overall the impact of the LWM on their situation has definitely been positive. Samira Ahmed told Amnesty International that she feels safer where she is and that if anything happens to her or anyone from Girifna, that others will campaign on their behalf.

“The international community has shown us so much hope, and governments are not at the heart of it – it’s people to people.”



Photo tweeted by Girifna

She added that in light of the recent renewed wave of repression, being included in the LWM was especially important to Girifna. It helped to lift the morale of the members, at a time when they were struggling to hold themselves together, to stay secure and intact, and yet were under pressure to still deliver. Girifna thanked Amnesty International members and said that the international support shown through the Letter Writing Marathon felt like a much-needed “pat on the back” while they recovered from the effects of the crackdown.

“It meant a great deal to know that people were learning about Girifna, getting in touch, putting themselves in our shoes and taking time from their day to connect with us from so many places... People were reading about this, and reading about what is happening [in Sudan]. We are recognised outside of Sudan and I felt proud of this.” – Samira Ahmed, Girifna

In recent months, Girifna has been able to attract many new youth members and supporters in Sudan, and this, they told us is “70%” of their goal - simply making Sudanese youth aware about what happens in Sudan and showing them they can stay and make a difference, rather than simply leave the country. They told us that Facebook and Twitter communities have become conscious about what is happening in Sudan, and in the midst of recent political instability, new groups have sprung up, inspired by Girifna.

“Other groups have come up and are doing other good work – small groups working in different neighbourhoods - they are [using Girifna’s methods of] flyer-ing and painting grafitti, you have politically-conscious song and poetry, politically conscious rap, there are so many positive initiatives that are springing up everyday.”

In total, 188,803 actions were taken in 42 countries on behalf of Girifna. On 31 January 2012, Girifna (@girifnamedia) tweeted a message of thanks to AI activists and posted a photo of some of the solidarity letters they had received. They wrote that they particularly loved the videos activists had made in solidarity, and had posted them on Girifna's [Facebook page](#) and tweeted some of them. They added that they are in the process of scanning the letters to be able to share them with a wider audience and plan to give each member of Girifna a solidarity card to keep, to have for whenever they feel alone or scared.

"I want to tell Amnesty International activists that they would never know how much it has meant to us, [the Letter Writing Marathon] came for us at the right time, we really needed this moral push... this feeling that other people care - for us it was like therapy. Tell them that we too believe in their cause, we thank them, and that if they ever need help, we will also be there for them. Together we can make a worldwide movement!" – Samira Ahmed



An activist in Canada shows her support for Girifna.

CHIOU HO-SHUN

TAIWAN

Chiou Ho-shun has been on death row for over two decades, following his conviction for two murders in 1989. Chiou Ho-shun and his 11 co-defendants said they were held incommunicado for the first four months of detention, and claim they were tortured into making confessions, which they later retracted. Chiou Ho-shun could be executed at any time.

During the Letter Writing Marathon, thousands of letters and cards were sent to Chiou Ho-shun in prison. He has given the messages to a volunteer group to help translate them into Chinese so he can understand them. It is clear that Chiou Ho-shun is very grateful for this solidarity, and he sent a letter to Amnesty International and other groups working on his behalf dated 23 January 2012, thanking everyone for their support. Here are some extracts from his letter:

"On the afternoon of January 23rd, I received your letters wishing me well. I was so happy to receive them! Thank you so much for your concern. I have also recently received letters and cards of support from friends around the world. I am very touched!"

"Even though giving your all will not always lead to success, as long as you never give up, you will never lose. So I will fight till the end."

"The sincere love that every friend has given to me gives me a bit of strength, making my heart feel warm. This life of mine has never experienced this before, so I truly treasure this blessing. I hope more friends are able to preserve the fairness and justice of the judicial system. Together we will make history towards a common cause, thank you everyone!"

A total of 144,720 actions were taken for Chiou Ho-Shun in 31 countries during the Letter Writing Marathon. The Letter Writing Marathon was covered by the national media in Taiwan and resulted in a response from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Although the response defended the death sentence given to Chiou Ho-shun, it still demonstrates that this type of international action is helpful in maintaining the spotlight on his case and keeping the pressure on the authorities. In addition to providing solidarity to Chiou Ho-shun, this international attention also provides support to other groups working to abolish the death penalty in Taiwan.



Stencil of Chiou Ho-shun created by AI Thailand.

HUSSEIN SALEM MOHAMMED ALMERFEDI

USA

Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi has been held at the US naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, since 2003. He has never been charged with any offence or brought to trial by the US authorities.

During the 2012 Letter Writing Marathon 54,136 actions were taken in 46 countries around the world for Hussein Salem Mohammed Almerfedi. However, impact assessment of actions taken for Guantánamo detainees is very difficult, due to the restrictions placed on information going in and out of the prison. Monitoring the impact of our work relies to a large extent on information received from the lawyers of detainees, which itself is subject to a strict classification procedure.

As of March 2013, Amnesty International had not received any information from Hussein Almerfedi's lawyer about the impact created by the Letter Writing Marathon. However, he has previously expressed his enormous thanks to Amnesty International activists for their campaigning efforts.

While impact assessment on this case is difficult, campaigning on Almerfedi's case as part of the Letter Writing Marathon has been important as a means of continuing to highlight the ongoing detentions without charge or trial at Guantánamo, and as part of the continuing campaign for justice for Guantánamo detainees.



An image of Hussain Almerfedi on a fence for a LWM 2012 event in Germany

5. DETAILS OF ACTION ON EACH CASE

Name of case	Human rights concern	Countries in which action took place	Estimate # actions	Political targets	Solidarity action
Belarus Ales Bialiatski	Imprisonment of prominent human rights defender on account of his work	Austria, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Bermuda, Bulgaria*, Canada (Francophone), Croatia, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Finland, Ghana, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia*, Lithuania*, Luxembourg, Mali, Malta*, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, Venezuela, Zimbabwe	104,955	President of Belarus	Letters and non-religious cards were sent to Ales Bialiatski in prison
China Gao Zhisheng	Respected human rights lawyer imprisoned and tortured in relation to his work	Algeria, Australia, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Brazil, Bulgaria*, Burkina Faso, Canada (Anglophone), Canada (Francophone), Chile, Croatia, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Latvia*, Lithuania*, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta*, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan*, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania*, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia, UK, Uruguay, USA, Venezuela, Zimbabwe	167,748	Premier of the People's Republic of China	Cards and letters were sent to Gao Zhisheng.
Dominican Republic Juan Almonte Herrera	Since his enforced disappearance in 2009, no one has been brought to justice and the family have not been informed of his whereabouts.	Algeria, Argentina, Barbados*, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Bolivia*, Canada (Francophone), Czech Republic, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Japan, Mali, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Slovenia, South Korea, Taiwan, Togo, Uruguay, Venezuela,	43,395	President of the Dominican Republic	Letters were sent to Ana Montilla, Juan Almonte's wife. A suggested message was given.
Egypt	Viciously attacked by	Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium	172,263	President of	None

Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman	soldiers during protests in 2011	(Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Brazil, Bulgaria*, Burkina Faso, Canada (Francophone), Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guinea*, Hungary, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Latvia*, Liberia*, Lithuania*, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta*, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria*, Norway, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania*, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, UK, Venezuela, Zimbabwe		Egypt	
Guatemala María Isabel Franco	Since her rape and murder in 2001, the perpetrators have not been brought to justice	Argentina, Australia, Barbados*, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Bermuda, Bolivia*, Canada (Francophone), Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mali, Moldova, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Pakistan*, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Ukraine, Venezuela, Zimbabwe	87,551	Vice President of Guatemala	Cards and letters of support were sent to Rosa Franco, mother of María Isabel Franco
Iran Narges Mohammadi	Imprisonment of Narges Mohammadi and harassment of other HRDs	Argentina, Australia, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Bulgaria*, Burkina Faso, Canada (Anglophone), Canada (Francophone), Croatia, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia*, Lithuania*, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta*, Mongolia, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan*, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania*, Russia, Slovenia, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zimbabwe	157,808	The Supreme Leader of Iran	None
Libya The Displaced people of Tawargha	30,000 inhabitants forced to flee by militia and harassed wherever they go	Australia, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Burkina Faso, Canada (Anglophone), Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Guinea*, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Japan, Liberia*, Mali, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria*, Paraguay, Poland, Puerto Rico, Senegal, Slovenia, South Korea, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, UK,	92,564	Minister of Interior in Libya	None

		Venezuela, Zambia*, Zimbabwe			
Nigeria Bodo community	Oil spill, Corporate accountability	Australia, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada (Anglophone), Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Ghana, Guinea*, Hungary, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Liberia*, Mali, Moldova, Mongolia, New Zealand, Nigeria*, Peru, Poland, Puerto Rico, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, USA, Venezuela, Zambia*, Zimbabwe	132,131	President of Nigeria	Photos taken with individuals holding signs saying either: "We support the Bodo community" or "Clean up the Bodo oil spills". If possible, photos were taken outside a Shell garage or a Shell office.
Romania Coastei Street community	Forced eviction of Roma community	Algeria, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Bulgaria*, Canada (Anglophone), Canada (Francophone), Croatia, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Japan, Latvia*, Lithuania*, Mali, Malta*, Moldova, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania*, Slovenia, South Korea, Taiwan, Togo, Venezuela, Zimbabwe	92,722	Mayor of Cluj-Napoca	Cards and letters were sent to the families
Sudan Girifna	Harassment, arbitrary arrest, sexual assault and torture of Sudanese youth activist network	Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada (Anglophone), Canada (Francophone), Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Guinea*, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Ivory Coast, Japan, Liberia*, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria*, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Russia, Senegal, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, USA, Venezuela, Zambia*, Zimbabwe	188,803	Minister of the Interior	Activists sent short video messages supporting the rights of youth activists in Sudan. Videos ended with the activist saying "Girifna".
Taiwan Chiou Ho-Shun	Facing the death penalty after an unfair trial and	Australia, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Benin, Bermuda, Burkina Faso, Canada (Anglophone), Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Hong Kong,	144,720	President of Republic of China	Postcards were sent to Chiou Ho-shun with pictures

	torture	Hungary, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Norway, Poland, Puerto Rico, Russia, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Ukraine, Venezuela, Zimbabwe			showing where they were sent from.
USA Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi	Detention without charge; Security with Human Rights	Argentina, Australia, Barbados*, Belgium (Flemish), Belgium (Francophone), Bermuda, Bolivia*, Brazil, Bulgaria*, Canada (Anglophone), Chile, Cyprus*, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Guinea*, Iceland, International Secretariat (UK), Ireland, Japan, Latvia*, Liberia*, Lithuania*, Malaysia, Mali, Malta*, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria*, Pakistan*, Paraguay, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania*, Russia, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, USA, Venezuela, Zimbabwe	54,136	President of the USA	None

6. BREAKDOWN OF ACTIONS BY COUNTRY

	Country (* denotes activities in countries without an official Amnesty International presence)	Total number of actions	Number of solidarity actions, if known	Estimated number of people who took part, if known
1	Algeria	13076	287	2600
2	Amnesty.org	5386		
3	Argentina	637		
4	Australia	53970		
5	Austria	27676	100	6300
6	Barbados*	398		
7	Belgium (Flemish)	265		265
8	Belgium (Francophone)	43536	12468	21000
9	Benin	65275	15000	4189
10	Bermuda	424	140	34
11	Bolivia*	1200		
12	Brazil	2566		
13	Bulgaria*	10		
14	Burkina Faso	16221		5000
15	Canada (Anglophone)	23464		28000
16	Canada (Francophone)	26763		
17	Chile	3251		
18	Croatia	259		
19	Cyprus*	73		
20	Czech Republic	11590	150	1500
21	Denmark	67100	4187	7400
22	Finland	9588	46	
23	France	562052	3000	130000
24	Germany	51689	70	51564
25	Ghana	2641		
26	Greece	7713	3487	1500
27	Guinea*	1118		71
28	Hong Kong	150		300
29	Hungary	901		400
30	Iceland	29000	320	
31	India	12000	12000	12000
32	International Secretariat (UK)	1370		
33	Ireland	6069	59	
34	Israel			
35	Italy	102477	477	28000
36	Ivory Coast	15650		500
37	Japan	6309	2838	
38	Latvia*	86		
39	Liberia*	138		
40	Lithuania*			
41	Luxembourg	2376		
42	Malaysia	300		400
43	Mali	13115		
44	Malta*	100		
45	Mexico	3334		
46	Moldova	2486		
47	Mongolia	9951		

48	Morocco	25488	19	
49	Nepal	10000		9000
50	Netherlands	60	10	25
51	New Zealand	1253	118	
52	Nigeria*	389		
53	Norway	59499	950	54000
54	Pakistan*	210		
55	Paraguay	2493		300
56	Peru	530		530
57	Poland	189103	45375	20000
58	Portugal	42468		42468
59	Puerto Rico	1034	407	
60	Romania*	35		
61	Russia	700		700
62	Senegal	9266		5000
63	Slovakia	2873		2895
64	Slovenia	10226	212	4600
65	South Africa	1472		
66	South Korea	21268	3921	7209
67	Spain	91000		10000
68	Sweden	52862	1372	
69	Switzerland	40938	945	
70	Taiwan	543	350	450
71	Thailand	4327	158	1400
72	Togo	54209	733	4536
73	Tunisia	3813		
74	Turkey	3258		3000
75	UK	3265		
76	Ukraine	15572		3000
77	Uruguay	1577		700
78	USA	57637	3566	56931
79	Venezuela			
80	Videos sent in Girifna	63		
81	Zambia*	62		
82	Zimbabwe	2145		
Total		1,913,391	112765	527767

ACTIVITIES BY COUNTRY

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ALGERIA

Total number of actions: 13,076
Estimated number of participants: 2,600
Individuals featured:
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna

For the third year running the Algerian Section took part in the Letter Writing Marathon; in 2012, they worked on five cases. Several activities took place in different provinces of the country and signatures were collected at universities in Bejaia, Biskra, and Saida. The National Secretariat organised a conference in Oran in partnership with “l'Association Féministe pour l'Epanouissement de la Personne et l'Exercice de la Citoyenneté” (AFEPEC). Other activities were organised in partnership with other organisations in Algiers, including a workshop with “le Réseau Algérien pour la Défense des Droits de l'Enfant” (NADA) and a session to raise awareness in schools with the “Bureau Nationale de l'Enfance Algérienne” (BNEA). These activities generated more than 13,000 signatures for the five cases.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ARGENTINA

In 2012, Amnesty International Argentina organised a street activity, which involved activists collecting petition signatures. This took place in the centre of Buenos Aires by the obelisk landmark, an emblematic location with great visibility.



Total number of actions: 637
Individuals featured:
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Russia – Pussy Riot*
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

For 2012's Letter Writing Marathon, Amnesty International Australia went beyond the Individuals at Risk Program to include online, media, publications, fundraising, government relations and other parts of the Campaigns unit. Eleven cases were chosen to campaign on, as it was thought that they would resonate with supporters in Australia as well as reflect the organisation's work within the country.

A dedicated section was created on their main website, using a self-service model where people could register events, download activism materials or request to have them posted to them, pledge to write letters, take online action for a case, and get help and information. Each case had three pieces of printed activism materials: a case sheet, a petition, and an "aerogram" (a pre-written letter for people to sign). In total there were over 40 pieces of publicly available printed materials for people to use at their events. The Letter Writing Marathon was featured online and on television, as well as in local newspapers. It was also advertised on Sydney and Melbourne buses and trams! A free Community Service Announcement featuring Narges Mohammadi was aired nationally on Channel 11. It continued to be shown into 2013 on Channel 10's new digital Channel.

Total number of actions: 52,352
Estimated number of participants: 43,996
Individuals featured:
China – Gao Zhisheng
China – Liu Xiaobo*
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Indonesia – Filep Karma*
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Iran – Nasrin Sotoudeh*
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Pakistan – Malala Yousafzai*
Russia – Pussy Riot*
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussan Salem Mohammad Almerfedi
Vietnam – Nguyễn Văn I v*

In total 43,996 people took action for one or more cases, of which 25,526 were new to Amnesty International Australia.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRIA

More than 27,600 actions were taken as part of Amnesty International Austria's Letter Writing Marathon at more than 25 activities around the country. These activities were held in cafes, pubs, shops and in public streets and squares. More than 60 teachers and schools reported that they had organised an event, with over 140 school classes participating and giving predominantly great feedback!

Total number of actions: 27,676
Estimated number of participants: 6,300
Individuals featured:
Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Sudan – Girifna

More than 20 staff members and activists spent four days in Cluj-Napoca in Romania to support the Coastei Street families in their protests to mark the second anniversary of their eviction. They were proud to hand over 5,400 signatures collected between October and December to the local authorities.

BARBADOS

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Total number of actions: 398

Individuals featured:

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed

Almerfedí

Volunteers from the Justice Committee in Barbados took part in the Letter Writing Marathon for the first time in 2012. Three events took place between 9 and 16 December in different parts of the island. The most successful was the event held at the Rally for Afrikan Solidarity on 9 December, which was organised by the Rastafarian Community. At this event over 75 signatures were collected per case and a former opposition leader took part! The other two events were held in a bar and a cafe.



Total number of actions: 265

Estimated number of participants: 265

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedí

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BELGIUM (FLEMISH)

A local group in Amnesty International Belgium (Flemish) Section organised an event, which was covered by the local media.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BELGIUM (FRANCOPHONE)

In 2012, Amnesty International Belgium (Francophone) set up its own web actions and targeted activists through social media and email. A special microsite showcasing the 12 cases was also set up. The most successful tool was their website: www.isavelives.be

Total number of actions: 43,536
Estimated number of participants: 21,000

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BENIN

Total number of actions: 65,275
Estimated number of participants: 4,189

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng
Colombia – MOVICE-Sucre*
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Russia – Islam Umarpashaev*
South Africa – Noxolo Nogwaza*
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – The Angola Two*

Amnesty International Benin generated 65,275 actions for the 2012 Letter Writing Marathon.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BERMUDA

Amnesty International Bermuda put their best foot forward for the Letter Writing Marathon 2012, despite limited resources. The main activity was held on Saturday 8 December in front of the Public Library in Hamilton. Several student volunteers devoted their Saturday to collecting signatures, and encouraging people to write personal notes of support and good wishes to the individuals highlighted. They collected a variety of Bermuda postcards, home-made cards, and handwritten and typed letters adorned with stickers.

Maps and brochures of the island were included with the cards and letters that went to Gao Zhisheng and Chiou Ho-Shun. The people who signed these letters were very moved, and wanted to learn more about how they could help.

As part of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project, Warwick Academy organised several activities to raise awareness about human rights within the school community. Students participated in human rights education activities and an information evening for parents.

Total number of actions: 424

Estimated number of participants: 34

Individuals featured:

Afghanistan - Young Women for Change*
 Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
 China – Gao Zhisheng
 Colombia - Indigenous people at Risk*
 Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
 Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
 Iran – Narges Mohammadi
 Iraq – Ramze Shihab Ahmed*
 Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
 Nigeria – Bodo
 Pakistan - Malala Yousafzai*
 Romania – Coastei Street
 Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
 USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed
 Almerfedi



the Bermuda context.

On 10 December, an Amnesty International youth group and the headmistress of Warwick Academy presented a role-play to the school community and representative of the Bermuda Human Rights Commission. The headmistress pretended to change the rules of the school, violating human rights. In response students stood up and fought for their rights. A video introducing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was shown, opening further discussion on global human rights issues and linking them to

Total number of actions: 1,200

Individuals featured:

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
 Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
 USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

BOLIVIA

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Volunteers in Bolivia took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BRAZIL

Amnesty International Brazil participated in its first Letter Writing Marathon in 2012. Activities were held in five cities across the country – Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Curitiba, Belém and Manaus. Local groups in universities were mobilized to write letters.

Special attention was given to the Brazilian case of Alexandre Anderson, with a public mobilization on the 10 December at the State Assembly, and an activity on the beach in partnership with a canoeing club.

Total number of actions: 2,566

Individuals featured:

Brazil – Alexandre Anderson*

Brazil – Nilcilene Miguel de Lima*

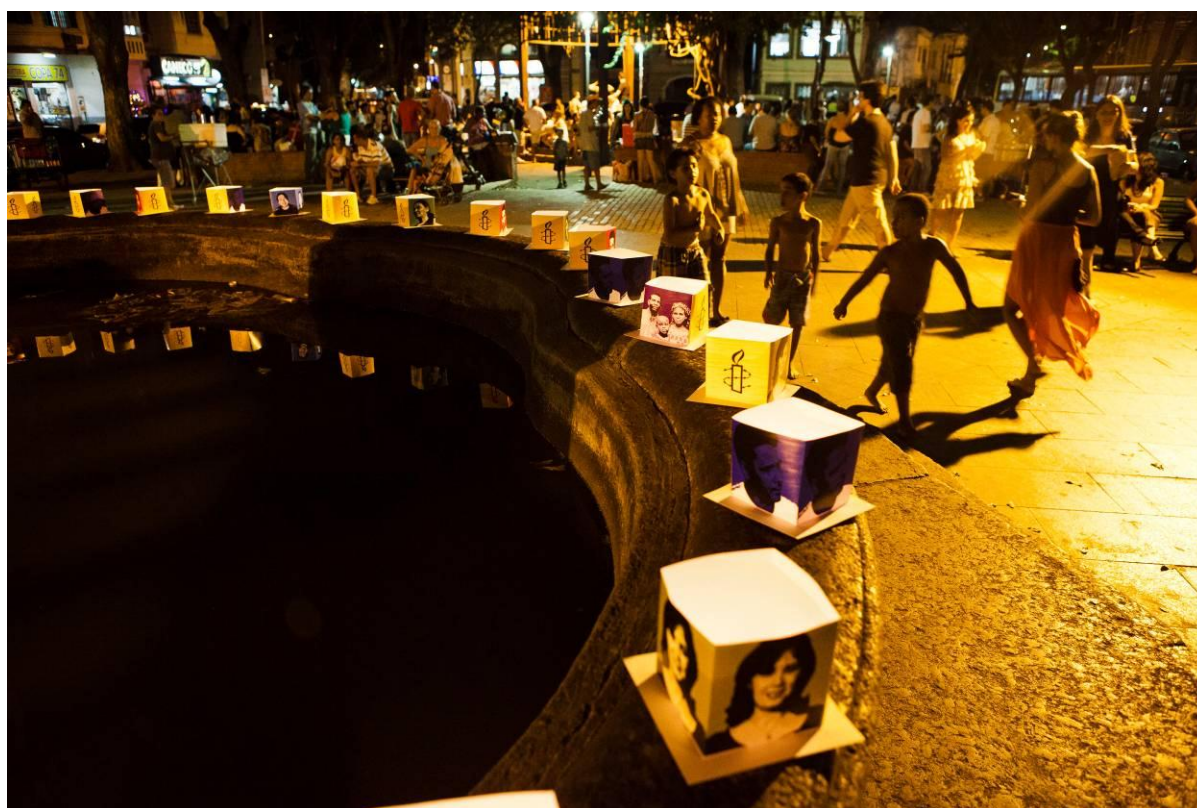
China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Nigeria – Bodo

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

The Marathon achieved huge visibility, due to fantastic media coverage on national and local TV and radio, online news sites, and local newspapers. This was an important step in raising the profile of Amnesty in Brazil.



BULGARIA

Total number of actions: 10

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Romania – Coastei Street

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Volunteers in Bulgaria took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BURKINA FASO

Amnesty International Burkina Faso recorded 2,483 online petition signatures and 13,738 signatures on offline petitions, giving a total of 16,221 signatures for individuals at risk. The number of new Amnesty International supporters recruited was 518 – far more than the target of 300 – and an estimated 5,000 new people are now in contact with the organisation as a result of the Marathon.

These results were achieved thanks to members' activities. A youth meeting was set up in Bobo-Dioulasso, where a public action in a square was organised by school clubs and youth groups. Groups also set up a stand at the Festival of Atypical Nights in Koudougou, an event which draws many people to Burkina Faso. The highlight was all the actions taken in schools and at the university, where Amnesty Burkina Faso members communicated with young people curious about and motivated by the cause of rights for individuals at risk.

Total number of actions: 16,221
Estimated number of participants: 5,000
Individuals featured:
China – Gao Zhisheng
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA (ANGLOPHONE)

Write for Rights 2012 activities in Canada's English-speaking branch were multi-dimensional. The highlight, in more ways than one, was the lighting up of the fourth tallest free-standing structure in the world, Toronto's CN Tower. During the night of 10 December, it glowed like a yellow Amnesty candle!

To raise money and awareness, hundreds of yellow Amnesty winter hats were sold and another \$15,000 Canadian Dollars (11,500 Euros) was raised through Stamps of Hope symbolic gifts, and fundraising by letter-writers. Musician David Usher set up the Artists for Amnesty webpage, where fellow artists donated songs to raise money for Amnesty. A photo contest encouraged people to submit a photo describing what human rights means to them.

An electronic petition for Gao Zhisheng was launched, capturing 7,600 signatures. Many individuals wrote letters on the other 13 cases in their homes. In addition, there were 291 organized events in community centres, homes, schools, cafés, and faith communities, all displayed on the cross-Canada Google map.

Canadian actor Zaib Shaikh hosted the major event in Toronto. It ended with an outdoor photo action for Romania's Coastei Street community in front of Honest Ed's, a city landmark. Despite the cold wind being so strong that it blew out many of the candles, everyone involved kept their spirits up!

Total number of actions: 23,464
Estimated number of participants: 28,000
Individuals featured:
Canada – Stolen Sisters*
Colombia – Indigenous people at Risk*
China – Gao Zhisheng
Greece – Manolis Kypreos*
Guatemala – Yolanda Oqueli*
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
South Africa – Noxolo Nogwaza*
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi



Although most of the writing activity across Canada was not recorded, we know that at least 30,000 people participated. Most of the messages were individual letters to authorities and handwritten cards to the people featured in the cases. Two participants (11 and 12 years old) said, "We had a Write 4 Rights party with 14 of our friends and family (and two dogs and one cat). We worked hard and had a lot of fun and ate a lot of carrots and cookies. Together we wrote 100 letters! We are proud of our work and happy to be helping other people. We're going to do it again next year."

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA (FRANCOPHONE)

In 2012, Amnesty International Canada (Francophone) organised 25 events, of which five were arranged by individuals. This represented the greatest number of events of any of its previous Letter Writing Marathons to date. Almost 27,000 have been sent as part of the Marathon so far!

Total number of actions: 26,763

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Canada – Stolen Sisters*
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Iran – Saeed Malekpour*
Romania – Coastei Street
Russia – Pussy Riot*
Sudan – Girifna
Zimbabwe – GAPWUZ*

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CHILE

Total number of actions: 3,251

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Russia – Pussy Riot*
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Amnesty International Chile organised various activities to generate the greatest number of letters possible. For example, 601 letters were collected at a Sabina and Serrat concert; at a school, pupils did a presentation on the cases from Russia and the USA and then collected 218 letters; and the Activism Team collected 134 letters from family and friends.

However, the most successful event of all was the Human Rights “Shine a Light” concert in Plaza Brazil on 14 December at which famous musicians Manuel García and Chinoy performed in front of thousands of people. Activists collected 2,500 letters and solidarity messages on this day alone. At the end of the event people lit lanterns, symbolising hope and solidarity for the four cases. This concert was the most successful event that Amnesty International Chile has organised in many years. Seven new members were recruited and the event gained a lot of publicity in the press.



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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CROATIA

A Letter Writing Marathon was organised by a university student in Croatia.

Total number of actions: 259

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Romania – Coastei Street

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

CYPRUS

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Total number of actions: 73

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Romania – Coastei Street

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed

Almerferdi

In Cyprus, a student volunteer held an assembly to inform others about the Letter Writing Marathon. With the help of another volunteer they also managed to introduce the Marathon to another school. Participants then signed online petitions and wrote letters.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CZECH REPUBLIC



Total number of actions: 11,590

Estimated number of participants: 1,500

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerferdi

Amnesty International Czech Republic focused on developing a one-off micro-activism network of people who were willing to organize an action. A special website was developed with attractive graphics, videos and all the necessary information to motivate people to organize an offline action. There was a special flyer for school teachers and students to emphasise that school is a great environment for this kind of event. This focus was a huge success and resulted in five times more letters than the previous year. There were over 50 public events held in 24 cities and towns all over the country; 15 new schools engaged with Amnesty International for the first time. Schools produced about 75% of all the letters and 99% of the organizers said they were willing to take part in the Letter Writing Marathon or other Amnesty International events again. As part of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project, the school Vyšší odborná škola a Střední škola s. r. o. successfully collected 60 handwritten letters, focusing on four cases. "The original intention was to write letters only during the school recesses (they are 30 minutes long in our school), but the event sparked great interest among students, so we decided to allow them to write also during their lessons," said the Human Rights Friendly Schools Project Working Group coordinator.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DENMARK

Total number of actions: 67,100

Estimated number of participants: 7,400

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Russia – Pussy Riot*

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfed

Amnesty International Denmark organised a cross-sectional campaign including press, lobbying, activism, and teaching activities. 3,578 pupils at 86 different schools took part in the campaign and a total of 67,100 actions were taken.

The lobbying strategy was quite successful and meetings were organised with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who continues to be interested in receiving updates and working on individual casefiles. Amnesty International Denmark plans to develop an international lobbying strategy in 2013.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FINLAND

Amnesty International Finland received over 9,500 signatures and petition letters via online actions and at interesting local events all around the country over 10 days.

Total number of actions: 9,588

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Chen Zhenping*

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Romania – Coastei Street

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfed



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FRANCE

As part of their Letter Writing Marathon, Amnesty International France aimed to reach out to new audiences to teach them about Amnesty's work and the situation of individuals at risk. The Facebook page "Unis pour défendre leurs droits" was made to highlight the stories of those individuals featured in this year's Marathon. This page, which now has 20,000 fans, allows the French Section to

keep new audiences up-to-date with the evolving situation of individuals at risk and of new actions on their behalf. Social networks allowed them to tell the stories of the individuals before the start of the Marathon, an initiative that celebrities also helped with. The writer Marc Levy told his 200,000 Facebook followers the story of Noxolo Nogwaza.



Total number of actions: 562,052

Estimated number of participants: 130,000

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Colombia – MOVICE-Sucre*

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Russia – Islam Umarpashaev*

South Africa – Noxolo Nogwaza*

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – The Angola Two*

Amnesty International France also welcomed two members of the Bodo community to give a speakers' tour. The visiting representatives of the Bodo Community provided ample opportunity for meetings with the media, activists, the public, and the French authorities. Pastor Christian Lekova said, "Being in France for the LWM was one of the most fulfilling experiences I have ever had, the LWM was perfect, well organised and communication about the action was good."

Thanks to activists who organised over 500 public activities all over France, more than 560,000 actions were taken on the dedicated website, www.marathondesignatures.org. This amounted to almost 50,000 actions for each case.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GERMANY

In Germany, more signatures were collected than in 2011. In total there were 51,564, of which 28,383 were collected online. More than 120 local actions were organised by Amnesty International members.

Total number of actions: 51,689

Estimated number of participants: 51,564

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Sudan – Girifna

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GHANA

Total number of actions: 2,641

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

In Ghana, five senior high schools participated in the 2012 Letter Writing Marathon. These were Accra Senior High, Suhum Presbyterian Senior High, St Charles Senior High, Bolgatanga Senior High, and Wa Senior High School.

The Marathon targeted all members but specifically new youth audiences involved in the Human Rights Friendly Schools project. A total number of 2,641 letters were written by students. This activity was carried out by the

Activism Centre Coordinators and teachers in the various schools. Materials were designed locally for members and students to take action.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GREECE

Amnesty International Greece had their most successful Letter Writing Marathon to date, recording 7713 actions for five cases. At their central event in Athens on 10 December, in cooperation with the Onassis Cultural Centre, activists and visitors gathered to take action and light a lantern for the cases. For several days, including during the event, LED lights on the Onassis Cultural Centre were lit up with images of the cases. For the second year Amnesty International Greece cooperated with the programme “Education for Roma children” from the department of Intercultural Learning of the National University of Athens. As a result 455 pictures were drawn by kindergarten pupils, mostly for the Coastei Street families.

Total number of actions: 7,713

Estimated number of participants: 1,500

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Greece – Manolis Kypreos*

Russia – Pussy Riot*

Romania – Coastei Street

In addition, four student groups, three local groups and two schools organised their own “Shine a Light” events in Athens and four other major cities in Greece. In total, four student groups, seven local groups, seven offline individual activists, 750 online individual activists, and 32 schools took part in the 2012 Letter Writing Marathon.



GUINEA

Total number of actions: 1,118

Estimated number of participants: 71
organisers

Individuals featured:

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Sudan – Girifna

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed

Almerfed

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

In Guinea, participants organised sporting events to bring Amnesty International to new audiences. In 2013, they plan to organise a 43-kilometre marathon to raise awareness.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HONG KONG

Amnesty International Hong Kong promoted the Letter Writing Marathon as part of a public event in celebration of International Human Rights Day, making use of exhibition boards, placards, stories and images of individuals to appeal to the public. Within several hours, hundreds of signatures and letters were collected, and there was both national and local media coverage.

Total number of actions:

Estimated number of participants:

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HUNGARY

Total number of actions: 901

Estimated number of participants:
400

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Amnesty International Hungary collected more than 900 letters and signatures – more than double the total from 2011!

They organised an event with a film screening, panel discussion, photo exhibition, and concerts. The event was advertised heavily online, especially through social media.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ICELAND

In 2012, Amnesty International Iceland worked with schools to reach new audiences. A competition was organised between schools to see which could generate the most petition signatures. Eight schools took part and students generated 6,500 signatures. When taking into account the population of Iceland (only 350,000) it is clear that this Marathon was a huge success!

Total number of actions: 29,000

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfed

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL INDIA

Total number of actions: 12,000

Estimated number of participants: 12,000

Individuals featured:

Sri Lanka – Prageeth Eknaligoda*

Amnesty International India sent out a call to the population of Tamil Nadu to send solidarity SMS messages and emails to Sandya Eknaligoda – wife of Prageeth Eknaligoda – who was subjected to enforced disappearance by Sri Lankan authorities in 2010. This resulted in more than 12,000 actions – an amazing effort!

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL I.S. (INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT)

Total number of actions: 6,733

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

The International Secretariat organised a letter writing event on 10 December at which members of staff wrote letters and signed petitions on behalf of the 12 cases. This generated 1,370 letters and signatures. A platform was set up on the Amnesty website for people to take action on the cases from Romania, Egypt, Taiwan, Dominican Republic, and Sudan; this generated 5,363 petition signatures.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IRELAND

Total number of actions: 6,069

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Amnesty International Ireland set up a website in mid-November to provide information and organised 12 days of letter writing on the Facebook page, focusing on a single case every day so that each case was focused on in turn.

20 local groups, 10 schools and four universities were involved in the Marathon, and they were sent packs with t-shirts, booklets, posters, lanterns, pens, and sample letters. The local groups organised events in different public places like cafés, markets, shops, and outdoor spaces during December. Youth and student groups also held events in their colleges. At these events we collected almost 6,000 signatures. During a three-day Christmas Market in mid-December, over 2,500 signatures were collected and 32 messages of solidarity. The public was engaged at this event and given lots of information on the cases.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ISRAEL

Amnesty International Israel took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012. No further details are available at this point.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ITALY



Total number of actions: 102,477

Estimated number of participants:
28,000

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Nigeria – Bodo

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

Amnesty International Italy developed a website (www.firmiamolitutti.it) to showcase the videos, materials, and the global action counter for the Letter Writing Marathon. The Section also developed a kids' Urgent Action on the case of Ales Bialiatski, asking children aged between 9 and 13 to make postcards of solidarity for Ales Bialiatski. Some examples can be found at <http://www.amnestykids.it/presto-arrivera-la-liberta/>.

56 local groups organised public activities in the streets to collect signatures and carry out solidarity actions. In total 102,000 signatures (online and offline) were collected and 477 solidarity actions produced.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IVORY COAST

Total number of actions: 15,650

Estimated number of participants: 500

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Nigeria – Bodo

Sudan – Girifna

Amnesty International Ivory Coast mobilised six groups, which organised petition-signing activities in their area and wore t-shirts advertising the cases. All of the groups then met on the beach in Bassam on 8 December to gather signatures and to recruit new members.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL JAPAN

As a pre-opening event, Amnesty International Japan organised a concert by renowned Japanese guitarist Kiyoshi Shomura on 29 November. An audience of 450 people listened to his tango!

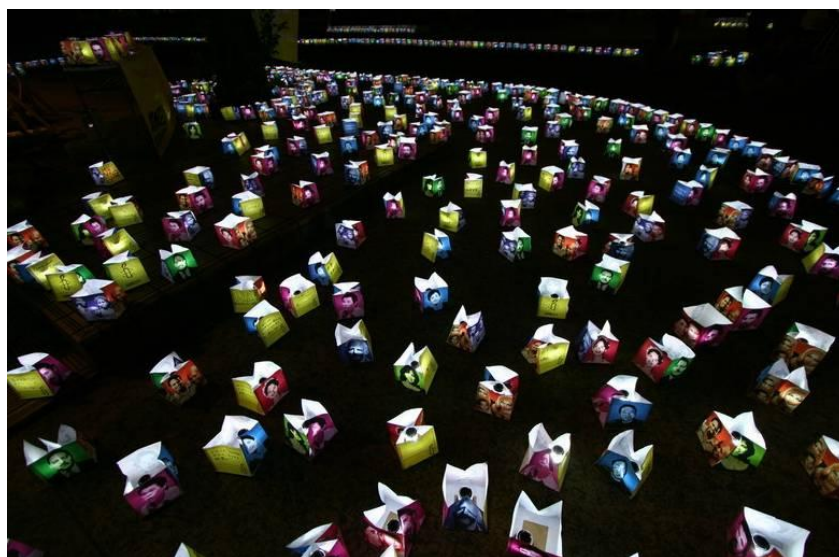
To celebrate the start of Human Rights Week, Executive Director of Amnesty International Japan and the Head Director of Human Rights Watch Tokyo collaborated for the first time to host a talk show. The conversation focused on the lack of understanding about and interest in human rights in Japan, and the importance of raising awareness among the general public.

A “Shine A Light” event was held on December 4 and 10 in Osaka and Tokyo respectively. In Tokyo, over 1,000 lanterns were lit and displayed in an attempt to shine “lights of hope” on those suffering human rights abuses. Over 300 people dropped by the Amnesty booth to write messages on the lanterns and show support for Amnesty International Japan’s activities. The scenery was breathtaking: the glow of the lanterns created a magical atmosphere, allowing visitors to forget that they were in the middle of a busy city. In 2012, a total of 33 events were held across Japan, and many letters were sent to the Tokyo office.

Total number of actions: 6,309

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi



LATVIA

Total number of actions: 86

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Romania – Coastei Street
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Volunteers in Latvia took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP GROUP LIBERIA

Amnesty International Membership group Liberia took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012. One of the volunteers said, “We really enjoyed joining the world for the Marathon and hope to do it more in the future.”

Total number of actions: 138

Individuals featured:

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Sudan – Girifna

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

LITHUANIA

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International’s International Secretariat)

Total number of actions: 2,376

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Romania – Coastei Street

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed

Almerfedi

Volunteers in Lithuania took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LUXEMBOURG

Amnesty International Luxembourg organised its annual march with torches in support of five cases on December 10. In addition, a new event was organised at which activists released lanterns displaying the faces of the individuals onto a river crossing the old town centre. The scenery was breathtaking!

Total number of actions:

2,376

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Sudan – Girifna



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MALAYSIA

Total number of actions: 300

Estimated number of participants: 400

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Amnesty International Malaysia collaborated with a local NGO for International Human Rights Day. Events were organised in two different locations: children made lanterns and parents wrote letters! A total of 250 letters were written and 30 new members recruited.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MALI

Amnesty International Mali achieved its goals for the 2012 Letter Writing Marathon, engaging traditionally involved establishments as well as new ones who were happy to take part for the first time. A diverse range of activities were organised in schools and public places to inform and raise awareness of the need to take action for individuals at risk. The diversity of these events has greatly contributed to the success of the 2012 Letter Writing Marathon. The most successful activities included public demonstrations and petition signings in schools; these provided opportunities to collect many signatures and raise awareness about the movement and the Letter Writing Marathon among new audiences.

Total number of actions: 13,115

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
International – Gender based violence during conflict*
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi



MALTA

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Total number of actions: 100

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Romania – Coastei Street
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Volunteers in Malta, assisted by a number of human rights NGOs, took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEXICO

Amnesty International Mexico worked alongside school groups in Mexico City on all 12 cases. Meanwhile other activists focused on the cases of human rights defenders in the Americas.

Total number of actions: 3,334

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Brazil – Laísa Santos Sampaio*
China – Gao Zhisheng
Colombia – Feminine Popular Organisation*
Cuba – Ladies in White*
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Guatemala – Yolanda Oqueli*
Honduras – COFADEH*
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MOLDOVA

Amnesty International Moldova took part in the Letter Writing Marathon for the second time, recording twice as many actions and involving twice as many activists as before. Almost 2,500 actions were taken, most of which were letters and signatures on online petitions.

Events were organised in about 30 locations in schools, local groups and public libraries. Online petitions were also used to collect signatures from people who would not otherwise be able to participate in the Letter Writing Marathon.

Total number of actions: 2,486

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street

The main event was held in the Central Post Office, reaching new people and attracting media attention, and took place eight hours a day over a five-day period. This provided an opportunity to interact with people who would otherwise not come into contact with Amnesty International or its work.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MONGOLIA

The Letter Writing Marathon leaflet was printed in Mongolian to promote the global campaign. Write for Rights events were organised in more places than in 2011, and took place in a cinema, a bookstore and a library on 8 December. On 10 December members and activists organized events with students in five different universities and schools. Local groups in Arkjantai, Erdenet, Darkhan and Baganaur also held events in their areas including training sessions to introduce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to secondary school children.

Total number of actions: 9,951

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Nigeria – Bodo

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi



At these events 9,860 offline petition signatures were collected for the cases from China, Nigeria, USA, Iran and Belarus; 91 online petition signatures were collected for the cases from Sudan and Taiwan.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MOROCCO

Total number of actions: 25,488

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Sudan – Girifna

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Amnesty International Morocco collected signatures from a wide range of places – from students at universities to big businesses. Visiting big business proved to be an effective means of collecting signatures – at Casablanca Technopark 8,000 signatures were collected in just five hours!

As part of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project, and in order to grow youth participation in the Letter Writing marathon, Amnesty International Morocco organised a youth forum, inviting students from Abi Dar El Ghifari and Ibn

Youssef high schools as well as other youth activists. As a result of this forum, students organised various activities in schools across the country, collecting 2,902 signatures and 637 letters.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEPAL

Amnesty International Nepal organized its Letter Writing Marathon on 10 December to coincide with International Human Rights Day. The event was inaugurated by veteran Nepalese human rights activist, Krishna Pahadi, with pigeons being released. A rally of more than 150 participants affiliated with Amnesty Nepal's Youth Networks started in Pulchowk Engineering college and went through Thapathali, New Baneshwar, Putalisadak, Sundhara, New Road and concluded at Basantapur. Before the concluding session, Amnesty Nepal youth activists gathered in different places in Kathmandu to sign letters on behalf of Chiou Ho-Shun and María Isabel Franco. Eight local groups and two youth networks from within Kathmandu took part, while many other local groups organised letter writing events outside the Kathmandu valley. More than 200 new members were recruited.

Total number of actions: 10,000
Estimated number of participants: 9,000
Individuals featured:
 China – Gao Zhisheng
 Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
 Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NETHERLANDS

Total number of actions: 60
Estimated number of participants: 25
Individuals featured:
 Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
 USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

The Americas Section at Amnesty International Netherlands took part in writing letters and sending solidarity messages to María Isabel Franco and Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEW ZEALAND

In New Zealand local groups were encouraged to organise letter writing events. Local libraries in Auckland hosted letter writing stations and a public event was held in a print studio.

Total number of actions: 1,253
Individuals featured:
 China – Gao Zhisheng
 Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
 Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
 Nigeria – Bodo
 Russia – Pussy Riot*
 USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

NIGERIA

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Volunteers in Lagos, Nigeria took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012. A discussion was held on human rights; participants then wrote letters, took action online, and used placards to raise awareness on behalf of the Bodo Community. New members were recruited and a party was hosted.

Total number of actions: 389

Individuals featured:

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Sudan – Girifna

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed

Almerfedi

The volunteers also organised an activity called “Catch Them Very Young”, which aimed to engage children as young as eight in writing letters. Then, at a question and answer session, children and adults alike engaged in discussions about human rights.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NORWAY

Amnesty International Norway organised 10 events and successful online actions. Local activities were arranged by groups and activists.

Total number of actions: 59,499

Estimated number of participants: 54,000

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Iran – Nasrin Sotoudeh*

Russia – Pussy Riot*

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

PAKISTAN

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Total number of actions: 210

Estimated number of participants:

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed

Almerfedi

Two volunteers organised Letter Writing Marathon events in Pakistan in 2012. One organised an event at BloomField Academy to discuss human rights, Amnesty International, the Marathon, and the cases themselves.

Another volunteer organised three separate events: the first at Boys College; second at the Degree College for Women Daultala; and the third for the general public.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PARAGUAY

The International Solidarity team at Amnesty International Paraguay took part in a number of events to collect signatures. These included “After Office Cycling” (a bike ride around Asunción and surrounding towns), and an event at the Puerto Abierto Guazú Market. Activists also collected signatures at their universities, workplaces, and from their friends and families. Here is what some of the activists said about the Marathon:

“I took part in the Marathon because it is a way to save lives”

“For me, the Letter Writing Marathon is a way to develop international solidarity”

“The Marathon was a wonderful experience because from Paraguay I gave my grain of sand to save lives around the world”

Total number of actions: 2,493

Estimated number of participants: 300

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Paraguay – Sawhoyamxa indigenous community*

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi



“I worked on the Marathon and it was a very good experience because I joined in from Paraguay to save lives”

“Taking part in the Letter Writing Marathon 2012 was an excellent experience. I feel happy to know that I am helping victims of human rights abuses all around the world”

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PERU

Total number of actions: 530

Estimated number of participants: 530

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Nigeria – Bodo

Amnesty International Peru's volunteers collected 530 post cards in five regions of the country.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL POLAND

Amnesty International Poland participated in the Marathon for the 13th time in 2012! Events were organised by local groups, other NGOs and local partners in more than 220 places (mainly schools). Schools were involved during the first week of December; between the 8 and 9 of December, people from all around Poland wrote letters for 24 hours straight. There were concerts, sport activities, dancing lessons and workshops – all to keep people awake and their spirits up during the 24-hour event!

In addition, Claudia and Ernest Greta from the Coastei Street Community came to Warsaw for the main event to share their stories. They held meetings with activists, members of staff, and national television stations and newspapers. When they saw how many people were taking action on their behalf, they wrote letters for other individuals. The visit was extremely motivating.

There was a lot of media coverage of the events, both in national and local media. During the Letter Writing Marathon 189,103 letters were written that targeted the authorities and showed solidarity with the individuals and communities.

Total number of actions: 189,103
Estimated number of participants: 20,000
Individuals featured:
Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Russia – Pussy Riot*
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PORTUGAL

Amnesty International Poland collected 42,486 actions, tripling last year's total! This was achieved by involving more local groups, schools, and universities. A website was set up especially for the Letter Writing Marathon and a concert called "Live Freedom" was organised, with involvement from three well-known Portuguese singers and radio hosts (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsiYWgOLTPg>). This concert took place in a theatre in central Lisbon in front of a full house of over 1,000 people. The musicians and presenters all chose a case to support. Dozens of news articles were published on the concert, all mentioning the Marathon cases and the movement's work in general.

The great success of this year's Marathon in Portugal was made possible by the support of their groups and the engagement of several schools. Hundreds of Portuguese children copied the text of the cases onto their own letter, which made them feel like they were doing more than just signing a letter and were making a real difference. Signatures were collected in schools, universities, and during a "Shine a Light" vigil in Lisbon and Oporto. Many members and supporters took the letters to the vigil to spread the message and collect signatures. Local newspapers also covered the Letter Writing Marathon.

Total number of actions: 42,468
Estimated number of participants: 42,468
Individuals featured:
Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Sudan – Girifna

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUERTO RICO

During the Letter Writing Marathon 2012, Amnesty International Puerto Rico invited Ana Montilla to visit the Section. Ana is the wife of Juan Almonte Herrera who is a victim of enforced disappearance by the police in the Dominican Republic. During her visit she participated in press conferences and TV programs to highlight her husband's case in Puerto Rico. The Section has also organized a meeting with the Dominican consul. In collaboration with Amnesty International and the Dominican Committee for Human Rights, Ana Montilla delivered a letter demanding to know the whereabouts of her husband to the consul. In addition to this Amnesty International Puerto Rico collaborated with several schools, cafes and organized a variety of letter-writing activities during the Marathon to involve the Puerto Rican population.

Total number of actions: 1,034

Estimated number of participants: 300

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

ROMANIA

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Total number of actions: 35

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Romania – Coastei Street

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Volunteers at a school in Romania took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012. Students organised themselves into groups to support the different cases, and presented them to others during classes and breaks. Leaflets and posters were distributed around the school to advertise the cases; students also prepared a letterbox, decorated with the case stickers, and placed it outside classrooms to collect letters. The event helped the students to improve their linguistic and argumentative skills in both Romanian and English, and taught them about social and political issues as well as the importance of defending human rights.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S RUSSIAN RESOURCE CENTRE

In Russia a public action was held at the concert of Lyapis Trubetskoy, a Belorussian rock band extremely popular in Russia. The band signed the letters and officially promoted the action through their website. Over 500 letters were signed and the Amnesty International logo, materials and contact details were presented to over 3,000 people.

Total number of actions: 700

Estimated number of participants: 700

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SENEGAL

Total number of actions: 9,266

Estimated number of participants: 5,000

Individuals featured:

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Sudan – Girifna

Amnesty International Senegal organised events at schools, universities and colleges to educate people on human rights. This was particularly successful because of the enthusiasm of the children. Other events were held at the Africities Forum and at the International Trade Fair of Dakar. The Marathon was covered by online news sites in Senegal.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SLOVAKIA

2012 saw Amnesty International Slovakia participate in its sixth Letter Writing Marathon. A number of actions on behalf of four chosen individual cases took place, with 13 events organized and almost 3,000 letters collected. The Letter Writing Marathon kicked off in the cultural centre of KC Dunaj in Bratislava, where a public presentation was given by an Amnesty intern. Since the presentation, visitors have been able to sign a petition and read about the cases and Amnesty's work there.

Total number of actions: 2,873

Estimated number of participants: 2,895

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Nigeria – Bodo

On 10 December an event called “Life Library” was organized, at which Amnesty Slovakia's Acting Chair gave lectures about Amnesty. Guests also had the chance to sign a petition at the event. Local groups took part and numerous cafes also organized letter-writing events.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SLOVENIA

Total number of actions: 10,226

Estimated number of participants: 4,600

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Slovenia – Romani communities in Slovenia – access to water and adequate housing*

Sudan – Girifna

Amnesty International Slovenia held events in schools, libraries, and youth centres. Scout groups were involved and public actions were taken. Half of all public actions were organised by activists who hadn't been involved with Amnesty before. The number of schools that participated increased from 2011 and the events were spread evenly across the country.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SOUTH AFRICA

Amnesty International South Africa focused on the cases of Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman and María Isabel Franco. These were integrated into the 16 days of activism campaigning to stop violence against women. This was organised with several local partners as a “Drumming Campaign”, with events taking place in public places across Johannesburg. Drummers got the attention of passers-by and entertained them, while the message was delivered: “the only thing you should beat is a drum”.

Total number of actions: 1,472

Individuals featured:

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SOUTH KOREA

Total number of actions: 21,906

Estimated number of participants: 7,209

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman

Guatemala – María Isabel Franco

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha

Nigeria – Bodo

Romania – Coastei Street

Sudan – Girifna

Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Amnesty International South Korea created a special pack for this campaign (including postcards and case sheets) that was used by 4,000 people. The Section also hosted an event where a famous Korean musician performed Balkan music in support of the Coastei Street families.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SPAIN

Total number of actions: 91,000

Estimated number of participants: 10,000

Individuals featured:

Brazil – Laísa Santos Sampaio*

Russia – Igor Kaliapin*

Sudan – Girifna

In Spain more than 60 groups of activists collected 30,000 signatures in public places. In total 91,000 signatures were collected for the cases of Girifna, Laísa Santos Sampaio, and Igor Kalyapin (61,000 signatures were gathered on online petitions). Aleksei Sokolov, a Russian human rights defender also gave a speakers' tour, visiting nine places. Along with Amnesty's participation in round tables with the “Fundación Autor”, this helped generate a lot of media attention during the Marathon.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SWEDEN

Total number of actions: 52,862

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun

The campaign called “Skriv för frihet” was a success in Sweden, with 105 Amnesty groups organising 102 external activities in the streets, shopping malls, and schools at 56 locations all around Sweden. Actions were also taken via SMS, phone, email and on Amnesty Sweden's webpage. Altogether 51,490 signatures were collected, of which 33,782 signatures were collected by the Amnesty groups. Amnesty Sweden also tried new forms of activism and fundraising as part of the campaign. The most successful activity was a digital solidarity activity, an application that enabled you to create and send your own solidarity post-cards to Ales

Bialiatski in Belarus and Chiou Ho-shun in Taiwan. The users themselves chose the amount to pay, with the surplus after-printing/postal costs going to Amnesty. In addition to banner placements, bloggers were engaged to create postcards to raise awareness about the campaign. Altogether 1,310 postcards were sent and there were almost 20,000 visits to the campaign site. Amnesty Sweden's campaigning efforts received positive media coverage. 22 newspapers wrote articles about group activities, two articles were written about the campaign, and 12 Letters to the Editor written by groups were published in local newspapers.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SWITZERLAND

Amnesty International Switzerland mobilized local groups and schools to take action. The Section also collaborated with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to develop a microsite and web action for the case of Laísa Santos Sampaio. This was one of the most successful parts of their Marathon in 2012.

Total number of actions: 40,938

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Brazil – Laísa Santos Sampaio*
China – Gao Zhisheng
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Sudan – Girifna

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TAIWAN

Total number of actions: 543

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

The Letter Writing Marathon 2012 proved to be a great way for Amnesty International Taiwan to connect with a wide range of audiences. By holding Letter Writing Marathon “parties” in a number of different locations and during a variety of events, Amnesty International Taiwan was able to engage new audiences and introduce them to Amnesty International's work, as well as empower them to take action. Events were held at a rock concert, with junior high school students, elders in the community, members of the English-speaking population in Taipei, and people from Chiou Ho-Shun's hometown in attendance. From the many brilliant moments of the Letter Writing Marathon 2012, Amnesty International Taiwan particularly appreciated the help of teachers and students from Nan-Hua Junior High School, Hsinchu. As part of a pilot project engaging the Letter Writing Marathon with human rights education, it was an awesome experience for the

Section and they are inspired and excited for future human rights education work.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL THAILAND

Total number of actions: 4,327

Estimated number of participants: 1,400

Individuals featured:

China – Gao Zhisheng
 Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
 Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
 Iran – Narges Mohammadi
 Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
 Nigeria – Bodo
 Russia – Pussy Riot*
 Sudan – Girifna
 Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
 USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Amnesty International Thailand exceeded its expectations by collecting more than 4,000 signatures and actively involving a younger generation in the Letter Writing Marathon in schools, universities, and public places nationwide. Awareness and discussion raised among the crowd at Kao San Road, Bangkok on 10 December made it one of the organisation's best nights in 2012.



Total number of actions: 54,209

Estimated number of participants: 4,536

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
 Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
 Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
 Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
 Iran – Narges Mohammadi
 Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
 Nigeria – Bodo
 Romania – Coastei Street
 South Africa – Noxolo Nogwaza*
 Sudan – Girifna
 Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
 USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TOGO

Amnesty International Togo encountered great enthusiasm amongst schools and universities, which were the primary targets for the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012. An internet café was devoted to the event, considerably increasing the number of web actions generated. The web actions were particularly successful because of the interest that the internet generates amongst young people. A dynamic team was also assembled to convince people to take action.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TUNISIA

In a big, famous street in Tunis, an Amnesty International Tent was set up for the Letter Writing Marathon. The focus was on talking to people, explaining how important it is to participate in Amnesty actions and to support other human beings (even those we do not know). The Letter Writing Marathon has introduced Amnesty International to ordinary people.

Total number of actions: 3,813

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
 China – Gao Zhisheng
 Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
 Iran – Narges Mohammadi
 Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
 Nigeria – Bodo
 Sudan – Girifna
 USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TURKEY

Total number of actions: 3,258
Estimated number of participants: 3,000
Individuals featured:
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Nigeria – Bodo

As well as organising events at universities, participating in online television programs and organising solidarity actions among young people, this Section also helped volunteers in various cities organise their own activities. A number of particularly impressive events highlighting the case of the Bodo Community were held in Istanbul. On 2 December, activists rode bicycles between various Shell petrol stations, ending at Shell's main office in Istanbul. They carried placards stating "We support Bodo Community"; "Clean up Bodo oil spills"; and "own up, clean up, pay up". On Human Rights Day (December 10) they turned various waste products from the auto industry into musical instruments, creating an orchestra of plastic bins and car parts! Organising the event in one of the most central locations in Istanbul, they were able to make music, collect signatures and educate audiences on the Bodo Community in Nigeria.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK

There was an overwhelming response to Amnesty UK's 2012 Write for Rights campaign. Thousands of people sent letters, wrote cards and left messages for the 15 cases featured in the campaign. Activists were out in force in their local area, organising letter writing events, inviting their local MPs, engaging with their communities and getting creative making cards and posters. In 2012, supporters also sent messages via SMS to be translated from English and written out into Russian for Mehman Huseynov, left audio messages of support for Jacqueline Montanez, and sent photos with messages of solidarity for Young Women for Change who work for women's rights in Afghanistan. One of the cases featured in Write for Rights was COFADEH. Members of staff from Amnesty UK and the IS met with Kenia Oliva on the day of the organisation's 30th anniversary and she told them, "When we receive cards from Amnesty International activists...we read them with love, because we know they were made with love for us. And they mean recognition for our work. That is a big source of satisfaction for us as human rights defenders."

Total number of actions: 3,265
Individuals featured:
Afghanistan - Young Women for Change*
Azerbaijan – Mehman Huseynov*
China – Gao Zhisheng
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Honduras – COFADEH*
Iraq - Ramze Shihab Ahmed*
Japan - Hakamada Iwao*
Kenya - Deep Sea community*
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Russia – Pussy Riot*
South Africa - Noxolo Nogwaza *
Syria - Anas al-Shogre*
USA - Jacqueline Montatnez*
USA - Reggie Clemons*
Zimbabwe – WOZA*

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UKRAINE

Total number of actions: 15,572
Estimated number of participants: 3,000
Individuals featured:
Azerbaijan – Mehman Huseynov*
Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
Guatemala – Maria Isabel Franco
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi
Russia – Pussy Riot*
Ukraine – Yakiv Sttrogan*

Compared with 2011, Amnesty International Ukraine tripled the number of letters collected. Over 15,000 were written in almost all regions of Ukraine. An online action was launched for the first time, and collected 400 signatures. The actions were organized in schools, universities, libraries, NGOs and other sites. The central letter writing point was organized in the "Ye" bookstore, where a successful press conference was also held. The Letter Writing Marathon was broadly covered on online news sites as well as on national and local TV and newspapers.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL URUGUAY

In Uruguay, awareness was raised at the concert of the well-known band Calle 13. This helped ensure the movement's message reached a large number of people. Events organised in a park in the centre of Montevideo and at a market helped to reach a diverse audience that were very interested in Amnesty International's work, the Marathon, and the chosen cases. Some of these people later came to the Section to buy merchandise or to get involved with the organisation.

Total number of actions: 1,577

Individuals featured:

Brazil – Nicilene Miguel de Lima*

China – Gao Zhisheng

Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera

Iran – Narges Mohammadi

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA

Total number of actions: 57,637

Estimated number of participants: 56,931

Individuals featured:

Bahrain – Nabeel Rajab*

China – Gao Zhisheng

Nigeria – Bodo

Russia – Pussy Riot*

South Africa – Noxolo Nogwaza*

Sudan – Girifna

USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

Amnesty International USA's 2012 Letter Writing Marathon was dubbed "Write#4Rights". The cases of Nabeel Rajab (Bahrain), Noxolo Nogwaza (South Africa), and Pussy Riot (Russia) were elevated as three "signature cases" with customized online actions, Twitter actions, and corresponding on-the-ground mobilization. These diverse cases were used as key entry points for both new activists and existing online supporters, who were prompted to pledge to write physical letters for all the Write#4Rights cases after taking online action on one of the cases. Amnesty International USA also launched a solidarity map for Pussy Riot, featuring celebrities and supporters from around the world. The map includes submissions from Sting, Anti-Flag, Foster the People and Flogging Molly as well as

nearly 4,000 activists. The media team garnered local and international coverage for both the general Write#4Rights initiative and on-the-ground events.



Office staff and activists launched giant balloons with Nabeel Rajab's face and Twitter handle to kick off Write#4Rights, partnered with Baltimore-based LGBT activists "The Light Brigade" to stage a projection action for Noxolo, and rallied outside the Russian Embassy for Free Speech on Russian Constitution Day.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL VENEZUELA

Amnesty International Venezuela concentrated on promoting the Letter Writing Marathon via social networks and the Section website. All 12 cases were worked on, with a special focus on the cases from the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Iran.

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Dominican Republic – Juan Almonte Herrera
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

ZAMBIA

Total number of actions: 62

Estimated number of participants:

Individuals featured:

Afghanistan – Internally Displaced People*
Brazil – Laísa Santo Sampaio*
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Russia – Pussy Riot*
Sudan – Girifna

(Activities organised through online community managed by Amnesty International's International Secretariat)

Volunteers in Zambia took part in the Letter Writing Marathon in 2012.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ZIMBABWE

Amnesty International Zimbabwe took part in the Letter Writing Marathon 2012, gathering 2,145 petition signatures.

Total number of actions: 2145

Individuals featured:

Belarus – Ales Bialiatski
China – Gao Zhisheng
Egypt – Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman
Guatemala – María Isabel Franco
Iran – Narges Mohammadi
Libya – The Displaced People of Tawargha
Nigeria – Bodo
Romania – Coastei Street
Sudan – Girifna
Taiwan – Chiou Ho-shun
USA – Hussain Salem Mohammed Almerfedi

* Denotes cases outside of the global pool