

SVAW newsletter 07

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<http://web.amnesty.org/actforwomen/defenders-index-eng>

Women defending human rights



Women human rights defenders from WOZA marching in Harare, Zimbabwe
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Women play a central role in the global movement to defend human rights. As active defenders, they promote and protect human rights for all.

In every country, from all backgrounds, ages and professions women human rights defenders demand basic human rights for their families, their communities, themselves and others. They tirelessly seek justice for loved ones or colleagues who have been tortured, killed or "disappeared" by government and non-government forces; supporting countless survivors of human rights abuses and their relatives in demanding justice, and protesting against widespread impunity for violence against women.

Women defenders of human rights face specific violations because of their gender and the issues they address. They challenge cultural, religious and social norms relating to the role of women in their communities and in society as a whole. As a result, they find themselves under the threat of violence. Especially women from marginalized ethnic groups are frequently subjected to harassment and repression - ranging from verbal abuse to sexual harassment, rape, and murder.

Despite the risks and pressures, activists – men and women – continue to defend women's human rights and women from violence and confront discrimination.

One of these courageous human rights defenders is Jenni Williams of Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA).

"Strike a woman and you strike a rock, we are not going to be deterred."

Jenni has been arrested or detained by police in Zimbabwe at least 15 times in the last two years. To her, and other WOZA activists, the arrests are a symbol – a potent reminder that exercising one's fundamental rights in Zimbabwe can carry serious risk.

Read more about Jenni and WOZA's story

Discrimination against women in Afghanistan will continue to have grave consequences until the government takes concrete steps to end it.

Link: <http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGASA110052005>

[Solomon Islands: Something to celebrate](#)

When women's organisations in Solomon Islands celebrated International Women's Day on 8 March this year, they actually had something to celebrate.

Link: <http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGASA430012005>

[Turkey: Justice denied to tortured teenage girls](#)

Amnesty International calls for Turkey's Court of Appeal to urgently re-examine the case of four police officers acquitted of the torture and rape of two teenage girls after a massively delayed and grossly inadequate investigation and trial.

Link: <http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGEUR440182005>

[Zimbabwe: More than 250 women arrested - some badly beaten](#)

Amnesty International is outraged at the arrest of more than 250 women after Zimbabwe police broke up a peaceful post-election prayer gathering in Harare yesterday evening.

Link: <http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGAFR460062005>

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[Israel/Occupied Territories: Women carry the burden of conflict, occupation and patriarchy](#)

Link: <http://web.amnesty.org/actforwomen/isr-310305-action-eng>