

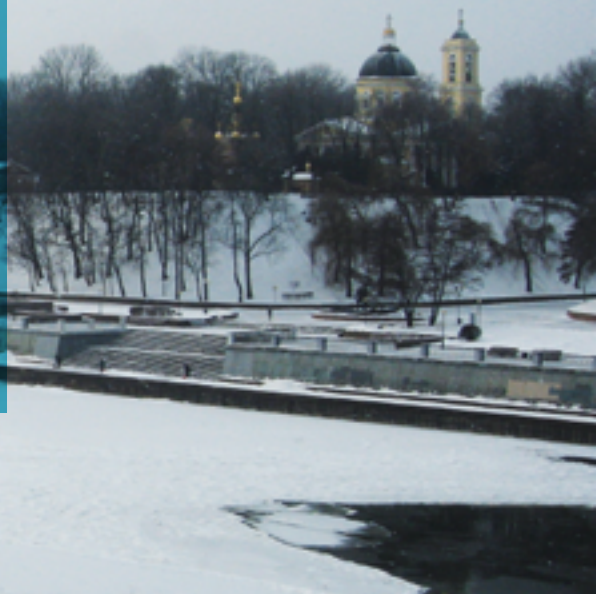
**WRITE  
FOR  
RIGHTS**

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



**MIKITA ZALATAROU  
BELARUS**

**TEEN BEATEN,  
ELECTROCUTED  
AND JAILED**



# WRITE FOR RIGHTS 20 YEARS OF WRITING LETTERS THAT CHANGE LIVES

When just a handful of people unite behind someone, the results can be amazing.

Twenty years ago, a small group of activists in Poland ran a 24-hour letter-writing marathon. Over the following years, the idea spread. Today, Write for Rights is the world's biggest human rights event.

From 2,326 letters in 2001 to 4.5 million letters, tweets, petition signatures and other actions in 2020, people the world over have used the power of their words to unite behind the idea that geography is no barrier to solidarity. Together, these individuals have helped transform the lives of more than 100 people over the years, freeing them from torture, harassment or unjust imprisonment.

This year's campaign channels this support towards people targeted for their peaceful activism, views or personal characteristics. This includes LGBTI activists, environmental defenders and peaceful protesters. These individuals have variously been beaten, jailed, shot at, harassed and intimidated. Through Write for Rights, they will receive individual messages of solidarity from thousands of people across the globe. They and their families know that their situations are being brought to public attention and they are not forgotten.

Alongside the letter writing actions, Amnesty also speaks to those who have the power to change these people's situations, such as politicians in their



Amnesty International Taiwan letter writing event, December 2020.

countries. Write for Rights also gives visibility to these injustices through public events, and garners international attention on social media.

Individuals and groups featured in the campaign in previous years report the difference that these actions make, and often describe the strength they derive from knowing that so many people care about them.

Often, there is a noticeable change in the treatment of these individuals, and other people and groups in a similar situation, by the country's authorities. Charges may be dropped and people released from detention. People are treated more humanely, and new laws or regulations addressing the injustice are introduced.

- Read about the people we're fighting for: [www.amnesty.org/writeforrights](http://www.amnesty.org/writeforrights)
- Contact the Amnesty team in your country: [www.amnesty.org/countries](http://www.amnesty.org/countries)
- Tweet your support to @Amnesty using the hashtag #W4R21

## BEFORE YOU START

This **human rights education activity** can take place in a variety of online or offline settings, such as a school classroom, a community group, a family or an activist group. As a facilitator, you can adapt the activity to best suit the group you are working with. For example, you may want to consider what knowledge the group already has about the issues discussed, the size of your group and how to best organize the activity to allow for active participation, the physical setting of your activity and any limitations. When participants want to take action on a case, discuss whether it is safe for them to do so.

The activities are all based on **participatory learning methods** in which learners are not merely presented with information; they explore, discuss, analyze and question issues relating to the cases. This methodology allows participants to:

**DEVELOP** key competences and skills

**HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY** to form their own opinions, raise questions and gain a deeper understanding of the issues presented

**TAKE CONTROL** of their learning, and shape discussions according to their interests, abilities and concerns

**HAVE THE SPACE** required for them to engage emotionally and develop their own attitudes.

- If you are not familiar with participatory learning methods, look at Amnesty International's **Facilitation Manual** before you start [www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ACT35/020/2011/en/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ACT35/020/2011/en/)
- Amnesty International offers online human rights education courses, including a short course about human rights defenders which introduces the **Write for Rights campaign**: <https://academy.amnesty.org/learn>





## YOUR WORDS

## ARE POWERFUL



### ACTIVIST FREED IN SAUDI ARABIA

Nassima al-Sada, a campaigner for women's freedom, was arrested in 2018 for peacefully defending human rights. While in jail, guards beat her and banned everyone – even her lawyer – from visiting her. But thanks to supporters worldwide who wrote a massive 777,611 letters, tweets and more, Nassima walked free in June 2021, and is back with her family and friends.

### FATHER OF THREE REUNITED WITH FAMILY

In April 2018, NGO worker and human rights defender Germain Rukuki was found guilty of a slew of sham charges and sentenced to 32 years in prison in Burundi. He was jailed before getting a chance to hold his youngest child, born just weeks after he was arrested. His family fled the country for fear of reprisals. On 30 June 2021, Germain was finally freed and reunited with his family, thanks in part to the more than 436,000 actions calling for his release.



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### ONE STEP CLOSER TO JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Friends Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula were murdered while heading for a night out in May 2017. Until recently, their families had been distressed by irregularities and delays in the police investigation. However, in March 2021, police revived the case after receiving 341,106 petition signatures from the families' supporters worldwide. The police have completed their investigation and handed over the case to the country's National Prosecuting Authority. "I feel optimistic," said Popi's sister Thembelihle. "I feel like finally, something is about to change."



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## ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that belong to every single one of us. They are based on principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect – regardless of age, nationality, gender, race, beliefs and personal orientations.

Your rights are about being treated fairly and treating others fairly, and having the ability to make choices about your own life. These basic human rights are universal – they belong to all of us; everybody in the world. They are inalienable – they cannot be taken away from us. And they are indivisible and interdependent – they are all of equal importance and are interrelated.

Since the atrocities committed during World War II, international human rights instruments, beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have provided a solid framework for national, regional and international legislation designed to improve lives around the world. Human rights can be seen as laws for governments. They create obligations for governments and state officials to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of those within their jurisdiction and also abroad.

Human rights are not luxuries to be met only when practicalities allow.



Amnesty International Benin letter writing event, December 2020.









## THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)

The UDHR was drawn up by the newly formed United Nations in the years immediately following World War II. Since its adoption on 10 December 1948, it has formed the backbone of the international human rights system. Every country in the world has agreed that they are bound by the general principles expressed within the 30 articles of this document.

The UDHR itself is, as its name suggests, a declaration. It is a declaration of intent by every government around the world that they will abide by certain standards in the treatment of individual human beings. Human rights have become part of international law: since the adoption of the UDHR, numerous other binding laws and agreements have been drawn up on the basis of its principles. It is these laws and agreements which provide the basis for organizations like Amnesty International to call on governments to refrain from the type of behaviour or treatment that the people highlighted in our Write for Rights cases have experienced.

# UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

 <p><b>CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES</b> Right to life, freedom from torture and slavery, right to non-discrimination.</p>	<p><b>Article 1</b> Freedom and equality in dignity and rights</p> <p><b>Article 2</b> Non-discrimination</p> <p><b>Article 3</b> Right to life, liberty and security of person</p> <p><b>Article 4</b> Freedom from slavery</p> <p><b>Article 5</b> Freedom from torture</p>
 <p><b>LEGAL RIGHTS</b> Right to be presumed innocent, right to a fair trial, right to be free from arbitrary arrest or detention.</p>	<p><b>Article 6</b> All are protected by the law</p> <p><b>Article 7</b> All are equal before the law</p> <p><b>Article 8</b> A remedy when rights have been violated</p> <p><b>Article 9</b> No unjust detention, imprisonment or exile</p> <p><b>Article 10</b> Right to a fair trial</p> <p><b>Article 11</b> Innocent until proven guilty</p> <p><b>Article 14</b> Right to go to another country and ask for protection</p>
 <p><b>SOCIAL RIGHTS</b> Right to education, to found and maintain a family, to recreation, to health care.</p>	<p><b>Article 12</b> Privacy and the right to home and family life</p> <p><b>Article 13</b> Freedom to live and travel freely within state borders</p> <p><b>Article 16</b> Right to marry and start a family</p> <p><b>Article 24</b> Right to rest and leisure</p> <p><b>Article 26</b> Right to education, including free primary education</p>
 <p><b>ECONOMIC RIGHTS</b> Right to property, to work, to housing, to a pension, to an adequate standard of living.</p>	<p><b>Article 15</b> Right to a nationality</p> <p><b>Article 17</b> Right to own property and possessions</p> <p><b>Article 22</b> Right to social security</p> <p><b>Article 23</b> Right to work for a fair wage and to join a trade union</p> <p><b>Article 25</b> Right to a standard of living adequate for your health and well-being</p>
 <p><b>POLITICAL RIGHTS</b> Right to participate in the government of the country, right to vote, right to peaceful assembly, freedoms of expression, belief and religion</p>	<p><b>Article 18</b> Freedom of belief (including religious belief)</p> <p><b>Article 19</b> Freedom of expression and the right to spread information</p> <p><b>Article 20</b> Freedom to join associations and meet with others in a peaceful way</p> <p><b>Article 21</b> Right to take part in the government of your country</p>
 <p><b>CULTURAL RIGHTS, SOLIDARITY RIGHTS</b> Right to participate in the cultural life of the community.</p>	<p><b>Article 27</b> Right to share in your community's cultural life</p> <p><b>Article 28</b> Right to an international order where all these rights can be fully realized</p> <p><b>Article 29</b> Responsibility to respect the rights of others</p> <p><b>Article 30</b> No taking away any of these rights!</p>



## ACTIVITY

THE RIGHT TO A  
FAIR TRIAL

## KEY CONCEPTS

- Fair trial
- Torture
- Juvenile justice

## ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

The activity examines the right to a fair trial using real cases of violations of this right. In the second part of the activity, participants can write a letter to protest on behalf of Mikita Zalatarou and show solidarity with him.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants will:

- **understand** the concept of a fair trial and connect it to their own lives;
- **describe** the consequences of a violation of the right to a fair trial;
- **discover** specific international standards on child justice;
- **feel** empathy with those whose right to a fair trial has been violated;
- **learn** about Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign;
- **write** letters in support of and showing solidarity with Mikita Zalatarou.

AGE: 13+

## TIME NEEDED

60 minutes.

## MATERIALS

- Handout: Children in the Justice System (page 10)
- Handout: A Fair Trial (pages 11-14)
- Handout: Rights Relating to a Fair Trial (page 9)
- Handout: Mikita Zalatarou's story (page 14)
- Sticky notes (two colours)
- Paper, pens, envelopes, stamps

## PREPARATION

- Print the four cases from the **Handout: A Fair Trial** (pages 11-14) and place them around the room.
- Print copies of the following for each participant:
  - **Handout: Rights Relating to a Fair Trial (page 9)**,
  - **Handout: Children in the Justice System (page 10)**
  - **Mikita Zalatarou's story (page 14)**.
- Download and print the **Child-friendly Children's Rights Convention** from: [www.unicef.org/media/60981/file/convention-rights-child-text-child-friendly-version.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/60981/file/convention-rights-child-text-child-friendly-version.pdf)
- Learn more about children's rights through Amnesty International's Human Rights Academy: <https://academy.amnesty.org/learn/course/external/view/elearning/221/an-introduction-to-child-rights>

## FOLLOW COVID-19 MEASURES

Be sure to comply with public health advice in your area during the Covid-19 pandemic. Conduct your activity in a way that ensures the safety of all participants and respects any necessary physical distancing measures.

If you are doing the activity online:

- **Choose** a platform that provides participation and interaction while being secure
- **Adapt** the activity to allow for relevant reflections and debriefing (in small groups)
- **Provide** technical support for participants to allow for good participation.

## IMPORTANT TO NOTE

It is important to note that this activity talks about violence and other difficult situations affecting a real child in Belarus. It may affect participants in different ways. Check in with participants to see how they are feeling.

## 1. HOW FAIR?

Place the four cases from the **Handout: A Fair Trial** (pages 11-14) in different parts of the room.

Ask participants to circulate in the room and read the cases. Each participant should put a tally on the scale below the case to vote how fairly or unfairly the person in each case was treated. After participants have voted on each case, they should return to their seats.

Discuss with the participants the results of the vote and why they felt the people in the cases were treated fairly or unfairly. Ask them to highlight similarities and differences, particularly in the case of Mikita Zalatarou (case 4).



10 MINUTES



## 2. THE RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL: MIKITA ZALATAROU

Distribute the **Handout: Rights Relating to a Fair Trial** (page 9) to participants, as well as sticky notes of two different colours. Explain to participants that they can use this handout as a reference for their next task.

Ask the participants to circulate between the different cases on the walls. This time, they should write down any fair trial rights that they think were violated in the case on one colour sticky note, and how they think they would feel in the person's shoes on the other colour sticky note. You should specify beforehand which colour is to be used for rights and which for feelings. They should place the sticky notes next to the relevant case.

After the participants have finished, invite them to share their responses.

Ask the participants to reflect on the following questions:

- Do you think that Mikita Zalatarou's right to a fair trial was respected?
- How has that affected his life?
- Do you think he has other rights and should be treated differently since he is a child?

Conclude by explaining that all people who are accused of or sentenced for committing a crime must still have their human rights respected, including the right to a fair trial. In addition, children who are suspected of having committed a crime have specific rights as children and should be treated differently to adult suspects. These rights and protections are guaranteed under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

■ Optional: If you have time you can share and introduce children's rights using UNICEF's simplified version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: [www.unicef.org/media/60981/file/convention-rights-child-text-child-friendly-version.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/60981/file/convention-rights-child-text-child-friendly-version.pdf)

## 3. EXPLORING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM



Form small groups. Give each group a copy of **Mikita Zalatarou's story** (page 14) and the **Handout: Children in the Justice System** (page 10). Explain that this is a list of specific rights and protections for children in contact with the justice system.

Ask the groups to look at the list and to mark which of these rights and protections were not provided to Mikita.

Optional: Read out one by one the rights and protections on the list and ask participants to stand or raise their hands if they think that this was not provided or upheld for Mikita.

Ask participants to reflect on the following questions:

- Were Mikita's specific rights and protections as a child/teenager violated?
- How does the violation of these rights affect his life?
- How would you feel if this happened to you? How would your life be changed?

Bring the groups back together and share their reflections.

Explain that, in Mikita's situation, his human rights and right to a fair trial have been denied but also more importantly his specific rights as a child have been violated. For that reason, Amnesty International is asking for the **release of Mikita and a fair trial that meets international standards for child justice.**



## 4. TAKE ACTION FOR MIKITA



Explain about Amnesty's Write for Rights campaign. Explain that Amnesty is encouraging people to write letters to support Mikita Zalatarou. Give examples from last year's campaign (page 3) demonstrating how successful writing letters and taking other actions can be.

If there isn't enough time for participants to take action within the time allowed, encourage them to plan how they can do so afterwards, or divide the actions among the groups. Encourage them to be creative.

■ If you have time, you can share this five minute introductory video about Write for Rights: <https://academy.amnesty.org/learn/course/external/view/elearning/145/write-for-rights-a-short-guide>

### WRITE A LETTER

Encourage the participants to write to the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus using the contact information on the right:

Explain that a personal message to the officials can have the most impact. You can give the participants the following guidelines to help them write their letter:

- Tell the Prosecutor General something about yourself.
- Tell him what shocks you about Mikita Zalatarou's case.
- Tell the authorities in Belarus **to release Mikita and ensure he gets a fair trial that meets international justice standards for children.**
- Optional: You can use the letter template on page 15.

**Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus**  
Ul. Internatsionalnaya 22  
220030 Minsk  
Belarus

**Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General**

**Email:** [info@prokuratura.gov.by](mailto:info@prokuratura.gov.by)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/prokuraturaby](https://www.facebook.com/prokuraturaby)  
**Twitter:** [@prokuraturaby](https://twitter.com/prokuraturaby)

### SHOW SOLIDARITY

Encourage the participants to show solidarity and friendship with Mikita Zalatarou by writing to him and expressing their encouragement.

Tell participants that the letters need not be long. The aim is for Mikita to feel that many people around the globe are thinking about him. Think about what would make him happy, or make him laugh.

If you're into Minecraft like Mikita, try creating environments that symbolize freedom and hope in the game, print them out, and send them to him.

**Mikita Zalatarou**  
Educational Colony V.K – 2  
ul. Batova 4  
Bobruisk  
213800 Mogilevskaya Obl.  
Belarus



**HANDOUT****RIGHTS RELATING TO A FAIR TRIAL****FAIR TRIALS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Every government has the duty to bring to justice those responsible for crimes. However, when people are subjected to unfair trials, justice is not served. When people are tortured or otherwise ill-treated by law enforcement officials, when innocent individuals are convicted, or when trials are manifestly unfair, the justice system itself loses credibility. Unless human rights are upheld in the police station, the detention centre, the court and the prison cell, the government has failed in its duties and responsibilities.

**RIGHTS BEFORE THE TRIAL STARTS**

A criminal trial is only fair if the rights of the accused person have been respected throughout the process. There are a number of rights to which everyone is entitled before their trial starts. They include:

- the right to release pending the trial (save for certain exceptions);
- the rights of people in custody to information;
- the right to have the assistance of a lawyer;
- the right to have access to the outside world;
- the right to be brought promptly before a judge;
- the right to challenge the lawfulness of their detention; and
- the right to trial within a reasonable amount of time.

**RIGHTS AT TRIAL**

These are the rights to which everyone is entitled during the trial proceedings:

- the right to equality before the law and courts;
- the right to trial by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law;
- the right to a fair hearing;
- the right to a public hearing;
- the right to be presumed innocent (also applies pre-trial);
- the right not to be compelled to testify or confess guilt (also applies pre-trial);
- evidence gained as a result of torture or compulsion should be excluded;
- no retroactive laws or double jeopardy;
- the right to be tried without undue delay;
- the right to defend oneself;
- the right to be present at one's own trial;
- the right to call and examine witnesses;
- fair trials must continue during states of emergency and armed conflicts;
- the right to an interpreter and to translation (also applies pre-trial);
- the right to a public, reasoned judgment within a reasonable time;
- the right not to be subjected to unlawful punishments;
- the right to appeal against the outcome.

■ Adapted from Amnesty International's "The right to a fair trial", Index: POL 30/001/2002

## HANDOUT

## CHILDREN IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

All people who are accused of or sentenced for committing a crime must still have their human rights respected. In addition, children who are suspected of having committed a crime should be treated differently to adult suspects. These additional rights and protections for children are guaranteed under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## ARREST, DETENTION AND TRIAL

Children who are accused of breaking the law have the right to:

- legal help and fair treatment;
- see a lawyer who is paid for by the state;
- see their parents or another responsible adult from the moment they are arrested;
- release pending trial unless it's absolutely necessary to detain them.

Under no circumstances should children be tortured, otherwise ill-treated or forced to confess to a crime. During their trial, children should have the support of their family and a lawyer.

The judge should take into account the age and needs of the child and ensure that they get a fair hearing.

## PUNISHMENT

Children must never be sentenced to death or sent to prison for the rest of their life. Prison sentences should be only be used in exceptional cases as a last resort, and should be for the shortest possible time. Children should not be punished in a way that is harmful to them, physically or mentally. Wherever possible, children should take part in community-based and restorative justice programmes instead of facing formal judicial proceedings and prison sentences.

## RIGHTS IN PRISON

Children who are sent to prison:

- should be able to stay in contact with their lawyer and family members;
- should not be detained alongside adults;
- must not suffer physical punishment;
- must not be denied basic things like food;
- must not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated;
- should be able to spend time with other children in prison;
- should not be kept in solitary confinement;
- should be able to continue with their education; and
- must be offered medical care to stay healthy, if they need it.

Children are entitled to these and many other protections under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.



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Mikita Zalatarou before his arrest

■ You can read the full list of children's rights here: [www.unicef.org/media/60981/file/convention-rights-child-text-child-friendly-version.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/60981/file/convention-rights-child-text-child-friendly-version.pdf)

## HANDOUT

## A FAIR TRIAL

## CASE 1: MẸ NÂM'S STORY

Nguyễn Ngọc Như Quỳnh has always fought against injustice. Known online as **Mẹ Nấm**, or “Mother Mushroom”, after the nickname she gave her first child, she was one of Viet Nam’s most influential bloggers in a country where dissent is often a crime. She faced constant harassment just for defending human rights and speaking out for truth. On Facebook, she reposted articles and pushed for action on police brutality and environmental issues, including a toxic industrial spill which killed thousands of fish. She also co-founded an independent network of more than 1,000 bloggers to help raise their voice. In June 2017, she was sentenced to 10 years in prison for “conducting propaganda” against the state. The flimsy evidence against her included participating in public protests, producing a report on deaths in police custody and possessing poetry collections deemed critical of the state. As her mother said at the time: “My daughter has done a normal thing in an abnormal society.” In prison, her health deteriorated worryingly and she carried out hunger strikes to protest against her desperate conditions. Her harsh sentence was part of a wider attempt to silence people who speak out in her country.



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SCALE: HOW FAIR WAS HER TREATMENT?

FAIR 1 2 3 4 5 UNFAIR





## HANDOUT

## A FAIR TRIAL

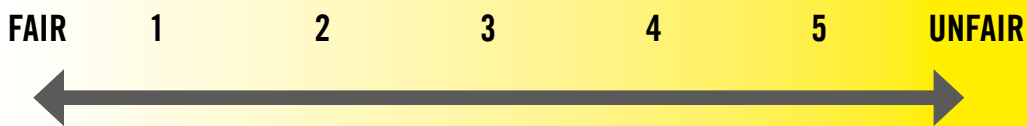
## CASE 2: ATENA DAEMI'S STORY

Like so many, Atena Daemi dreamt of an end to the death penalty in Iran. She wrote Facebook and Twitter posts criticizing the country's execution record. She handed out leaflets and took part in a peaceful protest against the execution of a young woman. These are simple actions which, sadly, take great courage in Iran. Incredibly, these activities were cited as "evidence" of her criminal activity and she was sentenced to seven years in jail. Her trial was a sham – it took just 15 minutes and she was convicted on trumped-up charges, including "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security". Her cruel treatment is one more bitter example of the intense crackdown on people who speak out for a fairer Iran. Dozens have been imprisoned, and many others face surveillance, interrogations and drawn-out prosecutions, forcing them into silence. Atena has suffered so much already. She's been beaten, pepper sprayed and forced into solitary confinement, but she continues to fight for human rights. She went on hunger strike to protest her transfer to a prison where her human rights may be in more danger. Her health also deteriorated alarmingly while locked up.

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SCALE: HOW FAIR WAS HER TREATMENT?

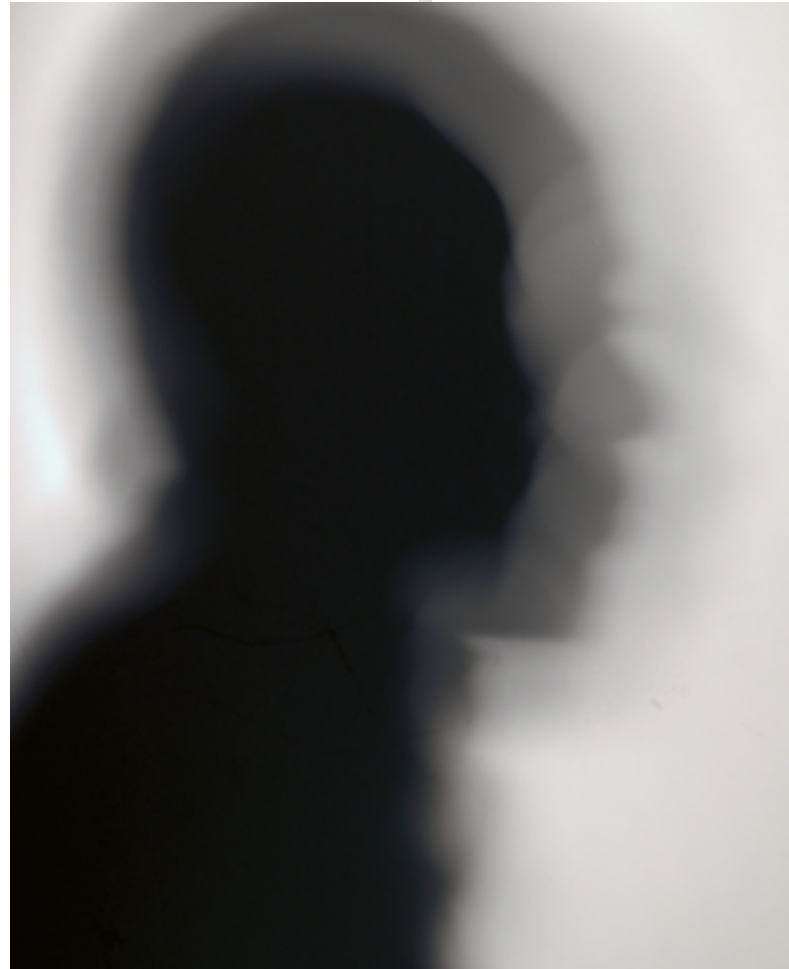


## HANDOUT

## A FAIR TRIAL

**CARLOS RODRIGUEZ'S STORY  
(FICTIONALIZED)**

Carlos Rodriguez was charged with murder on 4 January 2006. He appeared in court two days later. He was not allowed to choose his own lawyer, but the court appointed one for him. It was the first murder case that his lawyer had ever handled. While he attempted to gather some evidence in Carlos's favour, the lawyer failed to raise crucial matters that would have helped Carlos's case. In court, the police were able to present a lot of evidence against Carlos that they had been gathering for some months before his arrest. Carlos was found guilty and sentenced to death.



SCALE: HOW FAIR WAS HIS TREATMENT?



## HANDOUT

## A FAIR TRIAL

## CASE 4: MIKITA ZALATAROU'S STORY

Until recently, Mikita Zalatarou was a typical teenager. He liked playing Minecraft and listening to rap music. Today, the 17-year-old has been cast into a world worse than Minecraft's hellish Nether.

It all began in August 2020, says Mikita's dad, when Mikita was waiting for a friend in the main square of Homel city, south-eastern Belarus. Nearby, people had been largely peacefully protesting the recent presidential election results when police moved in. According to Mikita's father, as the crowd began running, someone told Mikita to run, too – so he did.

The following day – 11 August – police officers came to Mikita's door. They arrested him, beating and accusing him of throwing a Molotov cocktail towards two officers the night before. While holding him in custody, they beat him with an electric shock truncheon. Officers interrogated him without a lawyer or responsible adult present, and locked him up for six months before putting him on trial.

Mikita was convicted of mass disorder and using illegal explosives, even though video evidence did not show him taking part in violence. Media reports on the demonstrations mentioned no mass unrest. Still, the judge sentenced Mikita, who suffers from epilepsy, to five years in a child educational prison colony.



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## SCALE: HOW FAIR WAS HIS TREATMENT?

FAIR      1      2      3      4      5      UNFAIR





## HANDOUT

## LETTER TEMPLATE

## MIKITA ZALATAROU – BELARUS

Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus  
ul. Internatsionalnaya 22  
220030 Minsk  
Belarus

Dear Prosecutor General

Mikita Zalatarou was waiting for a friend on the street in Homel when he was swept into a crowd of protesters on 10 August 2020. Within 24 hours, the 16-year-old – who also has epilepsy – was in police custody, accused of throwing a Molotov cocktail. Officers beat him, electrocuted him, interrogated him without a lawyer or responsible adult present, and locked him up for six months before putting him on trial. Despite no evidence showing Mikita had been involved in any violence, he was convicted and sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

Please do all in your power to ensure that he is released pending a fair trial that meets international child justice standards.

Yours sincerely

Mikita Zalatarou (center)



# ABOUT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 10 million people who take injustice personally. We are campaigning for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

We investigate and expose the facts, whenever and wherever abuses happen. We lobby governments as well as other powerful groups such as companies, making sure they keep their promises and respect international law. By telling the powerful stories of the people we work with, we mobilize millions of supporters around the world to campaign for change and to stand in the defence of activists on the frontline. We support people to claim their rights through education and training.

Our work protects and empowers people – from abolishing the death penalty to advancing sexual and reproductive rights, and from combating discrimination to defending refugees' and migrants' rights. We help to bring torturers to justice, change oppressive laws, and free people who have been jailed just for voicing their opinion. We speak out for anyone and everyone whose freedom or dignity are under threat.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL  
INTERNATIONAL  
SECRETARIAT**

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**WRITE  
FOR  
RIGHTS**

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL 