

**ISRAEL: IMMEDIATELY DISCLOSE THE WHEREABOUTS TWO JOURNALISTS FROM THE OCCUPIED GAZA STRIP WHO WERE DETAINED BY ISRAELI FORCES.**

We urge you to immediately disclose the whereabouts of Haitham Abdelwahed and Nidal al-Waheidi, two journalists from the occupied Gaza Strip whose whereabouts have remained unknown since October 7, 2023.

We demand that you detail the legal grounds for their detention, ensure their humane treatment, including access to medical services and protection from torture and other ill-treatment, and grant them access to the lawyers appointed by their families.

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**CHINA: RELEASE FILMMAKER CHEN PINLIN IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY**

In November 2023, Chen Pinlin (陈品霖), also known as Plato, released a documentary, “Urumqi Middle Road” (乌鲁木齐中路), which records a series of peaceful protests against three years of rolling lockdowns under China’s zero-COVID policy and the harsh environment of censorship and surveillance in China. On January 5, 2024, police in Shanghai arrested him for “picking quarrels and provoking trouble”. He is being detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression. I urge you to release Chen Pinlin immediately and unconditionally.

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# CHINA: RELEASE UYGHUR STUDENT KAMILE WAYIT IMMEDIATELY

Kamile Wayit, a Uyghur university student majoring in pre-school education at the Shangqiu Institute of Technology in Henan, was detained on December 12, 2022, and sentenced to 3 years imprisonment under the charge of “promoting extremism.” These charges were reportedly based on Kamile having shared a video on Chinese social media app WeChat about a nationwide peaceful protest in China that commemorated victims of the Urumqi Fire. Kamile is being detained solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of expression. We call on you to release Kamile Wayit, stop the crackdown on dissenting voices in China, and cease targeting individuals for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

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# MEXICO: PROTECT JOURNALISTS AND ENSURE ALBERTO AMARO'S SECURITY

Mexico is the Western Hemisphere's most dangerous country for journalists, according to extensive documentation by Committee to Protect Journalists. Since 2019, Alberto Amaro Jordan, a 35-year-old Mexican journalist has been attacked, threatened, and arrested by police officers and intimidated by members of organized crime groups. Despite this, officials from Mexico's Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists have questioned his claims and even attempted to withdraw Amaro's protective measures. I urge you to immediately reassess Alberto Amaro's security situation in consultation with him.

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**MALI: IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASE PROFESSOR  
ÉTIENNE FAKABA SISSOKO**

I am concerned about the arbitrary detention and unlawful conviction of Professor Étienne Fakaba Sissoko, a university professor, economist, activist, and author. He was charged with "harming the reputation of the state," "defamation," and "dissemination of false news disturbing the public peace". The charges are related to his book, "Propaganda, Agitation and Harassment – Government Communication during the Transition in Mali," published in December 2023, in which he was critical of Mali's military authorities.

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**ANGOLA: RELEASE DIGITAL INFLUENCER NETH NAHARA IMMEDIATELY**

Ana da Silva Miguel (AKA Neth Nahara), a 31-year-old digital influencer, was arrested on August 13, 2023, by the Criminal Investigation Services in Luanda, the capital of Angola, for the crime of ‘outrage against the state, its symbols and bodies’ for recording a live video on TikTok on August 12 that criticized the president. On August 14, she was tried and convicted to 6 months in prison.’ Following an appeal by the public prosecutor, her 6 months sentence was increased to 2 years in prison.

Since her arrest, she has been denied access to her daily medication and was hospitalized in December due to her deteriorating health.

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# SAUDI ARABIA: RELEASE FITNESS INSTRUCTOR MANAHEL AL-OTAIBI IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY

Manahel al-Otaibi, a 30-year-old fitness instructor and women’s rights activist, was sentenced to 11 years in prison for “terrorist offenses” in a secret trial. She was arrested on November 16, 2022, and charged with violating the Anti-Cyber Crime Law due to her tweets in support of women’s rights as well as posting photos of herself at the mall without an abaya (a traditional loose-fitting long-sleeved robe) on Snapchat. On April 14, 2024, after being forcibly disappeared since November 5, 2023, Manahel al-Otaibi contacted her family and told them she was being held in solitary confinement with a broken leg after being brutally beaten in detention, and without access to medical care.

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**RUSSIA: RELEASE JOURNALIST MARIA PONOMARENKO IMMEDIATELY  
AND UNCONDITIONALLY**

I am concerned by the unjust imprisonment and ill-treatment of a RusNews journalist, Maria Ponomarenko. Since her arrest in 2022, there have been multiple reports of her ill-treatment and arbitrary punishment in custody in IK-6 (Shipunovo) and SIZO-1 and SIZO-2 in Barnaul, including being held in solitary confinement and not receiving adequate healthcare.

I urge you to release Maria Ponomarenko immediately and unconditionally. I request that you ensure that the ill-treatment of Maria Ponomarenko is immediately stopped and that her treatment in any prison institution, as well as while in transit between them, complies with international law and standards.

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**INDIA: RELEASE ALL IMPRISONED ACTIVISTS IN THE BK16 CASE**

Since 2018, Indian authorities have arrested 16 activists, including poets, journalists, lawyers, professors, artists, and a Jesuit priest, under a draconian anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in connection with the Bhima Koregaon-Elgar Parishad case. The repression of activists must end.

Therefore, I urge you to:

- Drop all charges against the 16 activists and immediately release those who remain in detention
- Pending their release, ensure that they are granted prompt, regular, and unrestricted access to medical care and other basic necessities
- Repeal or substantially amend the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

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# USA: STOP GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP AND EROSION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Widespread efforts throughout the U.S. that permit state and municipal-sponsored censorship through book bans on content related to race, gender, sexuality, and LGBTQIA+ subject matter restrict the right to freedom of expression. Removing and banning books from public libraries is a slippery slope to government censorship. States must respect, protect and fulfill the right to free expression by not interfering with it as well as take active steps to ensure people can enjoy this right. The right to freedom of expression is violated whenever a government limits the freedom of individuals to hold opinions or to seek, receive, or impart information.

We urge you to resist these dangerous bans, and instead pledge your support for additional resources to enrich the quality and variety of educational materials in our libraries and classes.

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# ARGENTINA: DROP THE CHARGES AGAINST GRAFFITI ARTIST PIERINA NOCHETTI

Pierina Nochetti is an LGBT+ activist, artist, educator, and mom of three kids who is facing criminal charges of “aggravated damage” for painting graffiti in protest of the disappearance of a young trans man in the city of Necochea, Argentina. The charges are an unnecessary and disproportionate restriction of the right to freedom of expression.

Pierina Nochetti is at risk of being sentenced to imprisonment of up to 4 years.

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# IRAN: RELEASE TOOMAJ SALEHI IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY

Well-known Iranian rapper and hip-hop artist Toomaj Salehi has been in detention for over a year for a "corruption on earth" charge and sentenced to more than six years in prison and a ban on his artistic activities, solely because of his peaceful exercise of the internationally guaranteed right to freedom of artistic expression, and for his advocacy for freedom and human rights and support of protests that took place in Iran following the death in custody of Mahsa Amini in September 2022.

I urge that his prison sentence and his artist ban be voided, and that he be immediately and unconditionally released, as he is detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his human rights including his right to freedom of expression.

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