



CANADA:

BLACK AND INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY AGAINST SYSTEMIC RACISM

By Daniella Barreto and
Ana Nicole Collins

INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES FOR
BLACK LIVES



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Making Canada an anti-racist state requires dismantling the systems designed to keep Black people and Indigenous people apart and without true power, sovereignty, and agency.

The history of colonization around the world is a story about control of land and perceived resources: the juggernaut of colonial power moving its way from territory to territory, continent to continent, claiming lands, resources, and people across the globe.

As this powerful system travelled around and gobbled up people to enslave, it also gobbled up the land that had been cleared of its rightful caretakers, land that was rich in quantity, quality and economic resources both above and below the soil. The two processes are connected: removing humans through whatever means, including forced displacement,

labour, social collapse and infection; and asserting ownership over territory through violence, edicts, and renaming. All to gain economic, geographic, and political power.

In the last few months, there have been several examples of violence against Indigenous, Black, and Afro-Indigenous people in this country by police departments and the RCMP. Some chiefs of police and RCMP leaders, including Commissioner Brenda Lucki, have publicly asserted that systemic racism is not a problem in their organizations. Their statements and their refusal to critically examine and address racism in their own forces show a lack of fundamental understanding of systemic racism, the intent behind the creation of police forces in Canada as well as a blatant dismissal of decades of inquests, inquiries, royal commissions, and external investigative reports into police conduct, including Amnesty International's intervention at the Ipperwash Inquiry.

(continued on page 3)

IN THIS ISSUE

- 6** | Activists in Canada
- 8** | Youth news
- 12** | Refugee rights: Amnesty wins in federal court
- 13** | Mining, human rights, and ethical batteries
- 14** | Climate Justice
- 15** | Earth defenders at risk



AMNESTY SUPPORTERS HELP FREE HONDURAN ASYLUM SEEKER

Kelly Aguilar is a 24-year-old asylum seeker who fled Honduras when she was just 12 because of violence against her based on her gender identity. In August 2017, Kelly travelled to the US, where immigration authorities detained her while she waited for the results of her asylum claim. Amnesty activists called for Kelly to be freed and in July she was released. Kelly expressed deep appreciation to all who took action on her behalf: "I'm completely grateful to all the people who have helped me since day one, since day zero that I've been fighting for my liberty. I'm infinitely grateful because without your support this wouldn't have happened!"

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S VISION AND MISSION

Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of these rights.

RECEIVING ACTIVIST MAGAZINE

To receive Activist magazine, phone **1-800-AMNESTY (1-800-266-3789)** and confirm you are a supporter. Published in print three times a year, Activist is free to all Amnesty supporters who request it. Change of address or problems receiving Activist? Contact Sue McNamara at our National Office by email at smcnamara@amnesty.ca

BRANCH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Fundraised revenue for the first seven months of 2020 amounted to \$7.374 million, less than the budgeted amount of \$7.521 million, resulting in a shortfall from budget for fundraised revenue of \$147 thousand. However, fundraising has performed far better than we dared hope when the pandemic started. Income from other sources amounted to \$23 thousand, resulting in total revenue for the period of \$7.397 million.

In early spring, the financial uncertainties that the pandemic brought led to the Branch implementing significant reductions to expenses. Expenditures for the first seven months amounted to \$7.253 million, an amount which is significantly less than the budgeted amount of \$7.943 million. The Branch is in a healthy financial position going into the final months of the year.

Table of Revenue & Expenditure (in 000s of dollars)

	Actual to July 31	Budget to July 31
Revenues		
Fundraised	7,374	7,521
Other	23	45
Subtotal	7,397	7,566
Expenditures	7,253	7,943
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	144	(377)

There was a net surplus from operations for the seven-month period of \$144 thousand as compared to the budgeted net deficit of \$377 thousand. In normal years, the most productive months from a fundraising standpoint are from September to December. As difficult as it is to predict how fundraising may perform to the end of 2020, we are cautiously optimistic that the Branch will be in a good financial position as of the end of the year.

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(dgriffiths@amnesty.ca)

Activist is the result of the collaborative efforts of numerous people. Many thanks to everyone who helped with this issue.

NEXT PRINT ISSUE

The next issue will be mailed by November 10, 2020. The deadline to submit content for that issue is October 5, 2020.

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National Office
312 Laurier Avenue East,
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H9
PHONE 613-744-7667 or
1-800-AMNESTY
(1-800-266-3789)
FAX 613-746-2411
E-MAIL members@amnesty.ca
WEB www.amnesty.ca

Toronto Office
1992 Yonge Street, 3rd Floor
Toronto, ON M4S 1T7
PHONE 416-363-9933
FAX 416-363-3103
E-MAIL toronto@amnesty.ca

Vancouver Office
Suite 430, 319 West Pender
Vancouver, BC V6B 1T3
PHONE 604-294-5160
E-MAIL vancouver@amnesty.ca

CANADA: BLACK AND INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY AGAINST SYSTEMIC RACISM

(cover story continued)

Despite Commissioner Lucki's initial denial and clumsy about-face on the issue of systemic racism within the RCMP, a recent poll suggests that 75% of Canadians believe there is systemic racism within the country's national police force. Given the RCMP's history, this should not be surprising. The organization's purpose has been and continues to be enforcing the imposed laws of a settler-colonial state.

State violence is not just created by policing.

It includes racial laws, inequitable provision of services, intentional neglect and exclusion, social bias, and the ways institutional policies impact the well-being of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. State violence includes the child and family welfare system, the education system, representation in governments at all levels, and healthcare, among many others. Some Premiers have denied the existence of systemic racism in a very similar manner to heads of police forces.

Due to the work of Cindy Blackstock through the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found that the federal government refused and failed to provide equal services to First Nation children for decades. If we look at the work by Black parents and organizations advocating for their children, we see the same discrimination: lack of funding, lack of training, lack of support. It would be hard to make an argument that Canadian society is not intrinsically biased, racist, and oppressive. Canada is, by definition, a settler-colonial society.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RCMP AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The government of John A. MacDonald established the North West Mounted Police (later the RCMP) to facilitate the transfer of Indigenous territory to the federal government. This was enforced by displacing Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories through forced relocation, starvation, and war. The government then created a pass system whereby Indian Agents determined whether a First Nations person could leave the reserve. This law was in place until 1940 and

relied on police and RCMP to enforce it. The RCMP was also an active agent in ensuring Indigenous children were taken from their families and placed in Indian Residential Schools violating many human rights. The RCMP is an institution founded to protect and enforce white supremacy and has much to reckon with and account for before any attempts at reform can be legitimately undertaken.

Police forces in Canada do not have a better record in their relationships with Indigenous people and communities. Proportionally, Indigenous and Black people are far more likely to die in a police shooting than white people. As journalist Brandi Morin has shown, police kill 1.5 out of every 100,000 Indigenous people, and 0.5 out of every 100,000 Black people. Compared to the general Canadian rate of 0.3 per 100,000 and the rate for white Canadians of 0.13 per 100,000, the disparity is stark. To be clear, nobody should be killed by the police.

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BRIEF HISTORY OF CANADA POLICING AND CRIMINALIZING BLACK PEOPLE

The experiences of Black people in Canada, including enslavement, are often omitted from school curricula, museum exhibits, and official stories, except to highlight Canada's position as the beacon of freedom at the end of the Underground Railroad. This perpetuates the often common misperception that anti-Black racism is 'not as bad' here as in the United States when it is actually baked into our society. Black people in Canada have

experienced enslavement, criminalization, immigration bans, and discrimination resulting in underservice and exclusion in education, housing, healthcare, and employment. Many Black Canadians have been pushed to Canada from other countries ravaged by colonialism, and their experiences in Canada are similar each with their own distinctions. There are global threads of white supremacy, violence, exploitative resource extraction, and disposability of Black people that run parallel to the experiences of Indigenous people on this colonized land.

Living in Canada as a Black person comes with the imposed presumption of criminality, manifesting in the surveillance and over-policing of Black individuals and communities, unjust encounters with police officers, and introduction into a system which treats Black people more harshly for the same crimes and results in a disproportionate number of Black people in prisons. Indigenous people are also disproportionately represented in the prison system for similar reasons.

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

THESE STRUGGLES ARE CONNECTED AND CONTINUE TODAY

The impacts of colonialism and white supremacy continue to similarly affect Black and Indigenous people in Canada today, albeit in distinct ways. Both are criminalized by wider society as the reason for their own experiences of racism and even their deaths. Both are systemically excluded from and surveilled/overpoliced in public space, excluded from access to education, jobs, housing and food security. The social determinants of health are placed far out of reach for many Black and Indigenous people in Canada. The convergence of criminalization, systemic racism, and frequent interactions with police lays the foreground for violence and death for Black people and Indigenous people alike.

THE MEDIA PITTING BLACK AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER IS WRONG

Black liberation and Indigenous sovereignty are inextricably linked. The history of Afro-Indigenous people in Canada is often erased, yet there are many people who are Black and Indigenous and there are longstanding relationships between the many different communities. In a country built on white supremacy, it is a threat to the order of society for oppressed people to work in solidarity with each other because this poses a real challenge to power. A common tactic of those in power is to pit different groups against each other as if each were the problem. We see this in authorless newspaper headlines like “Let’s Save Some Outrage for Treatment of Indigenous People”. We see this in the ways we have been socialized to believe in a scarcity of rights or resources and a quick regression to “what about us?” when one group seems to be making civil and human rights advances. We can wholly reject the idea that there is only so much freedom to go around and work together for liberation for all. The answer to ending police violence against Black people and Indigenous people does not lie only in the smaller objectives like municipal governments shifting money from police budgets to social supports, it lies in dismantling whole systems designed to keep us apart and keep us without true power, sovereignty, and agency.

WE CAN DO BETTER

What can we do to make Canada an anti-racist state? We could follow the lead of individuals and organizations who have been advocating for justice for years. We can build on the ideas and actions of those who have come before us and create a new society and way of interacting with each other that respects the rights and autonomy of Black and Indigenous people and honours their futures. We already mentioned Cindy Blackstock, but there are

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others like Larissa Crawford, Zanana Akande, Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild, Lillian Dyck, Anthony Morgan, Sandy Hudson, and Robyn Maynard among many others, who show us the way forward.

The federal government could start by paying the damages to First Nations children ordered by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, governments could immediately make restorative changes to their funding mechanisms and make restorative justice a priority. We can call for the removal of police officers from schools, ensure that all children receive the same access to quality and culturally appropriate education, and push governments to strengthen social programs to respond to the needs and priorities of communities. Of the groups advocating for defunding and reducing the scope of police services, Black Lives Matter Canada also promotes the creation of alternatives including harm reduction, decriminalizing sex-work, and secure housing options.

Black and Indigenous communities know their own histories and priorities for the future. They have been building and advocating for solutions for a long time. The most supportive work that could be done in collaboration, would be to empower, echo, and fund the suggestions and demands of Black and Indigenous people for how to build a society that respects human rights and ensures that all people thrive and create better futures.

About the writers: Daniella Barreto and Ana Nicole Collins are members of Amnesty Canada’s Campaigns and Activism team. Daniella is the Digital Activism Coordinator; Ana is the Indigenous Rights Advisor.

About the artist: The art on page 1 is by Megan Tippler, a Métis educator who is committed to disrupting and decolonizing the curriculum and her teaching practices. She uses her Instagram page (@tiplerteaches) to share information about diverse literature and help other teachers find ways to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into the classroom.

CANADA'S PREMIERS MUST ADDRESS SYSTEMIC RACISM IN POLICING

COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN speaking out for decades about how Black people experience policing in Canada. Recent tragic incidents once again underscore the urgent need for fundamental change. Wellness checks—calls for assistance from either individuals or concerned relatives—particularly for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) have ended in excessive use of force or even death.

In April, 26-year-old D'Andre Campbell was shot in his home by Peel police officers. In May, 29-year-old Regis Korchinski-Paquet, who is Black and Indigenous, plummeted to her death from the 24th floor of her apartment building after municipal police officers entered the residence in Toronto. In June, 62-year-old Ejaz Ahmed Choudry was shot and killed by police in Mississauga. 26-year-old Chantel Moore, an Indigenous woman originally from BC, was shot dead by Edmundston Police in New Brunswick.

These were not the only interactions that resulted in deaths, and they were not isolated incidents. Often police are the only responders to wellness checks. Even when other services are the first responders, police become the default option if those initially at the scene no longer feel they can manage the situation.

Write a letter to the Premier of your province or territory, and urge them to support new, transformative approaches to upholding public safety.

It's time to listen to what Black, Indigenous and People of Colour have been saying for years: We urgently need new, transformative approaches to upholding public safety. People calling 911 for help should not by default become the object of enforcement measures or be shot dead by police. Both provincial and international studies have highlighted the disproportionate risk that Black people in particular face. According to the 2018 Ontario Human Rights Commission interim report on anti-Black racism in

policing, Black people in Toronto are up to 20 times more likely to be shot dead by police than white people.

According to a Vancouver Police Board Study, Indigenous and Black people are significantly over-represented in street checks conducted by the Vancouver Police Department. In 2017, 16% of all street checks were of Indigenous people, despite making up 2% of Vancouver's population. Black people accounted for 4% of street checks despite making up 1% of the population.

The United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent has raised alarms about systemic racism within Canada's justice system, including specific concerns on how police practices such as carding disproportionately impact Black people. Those concerns are also documented in numerous other reports, including from the Ontario Human Rights Commission and Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission.

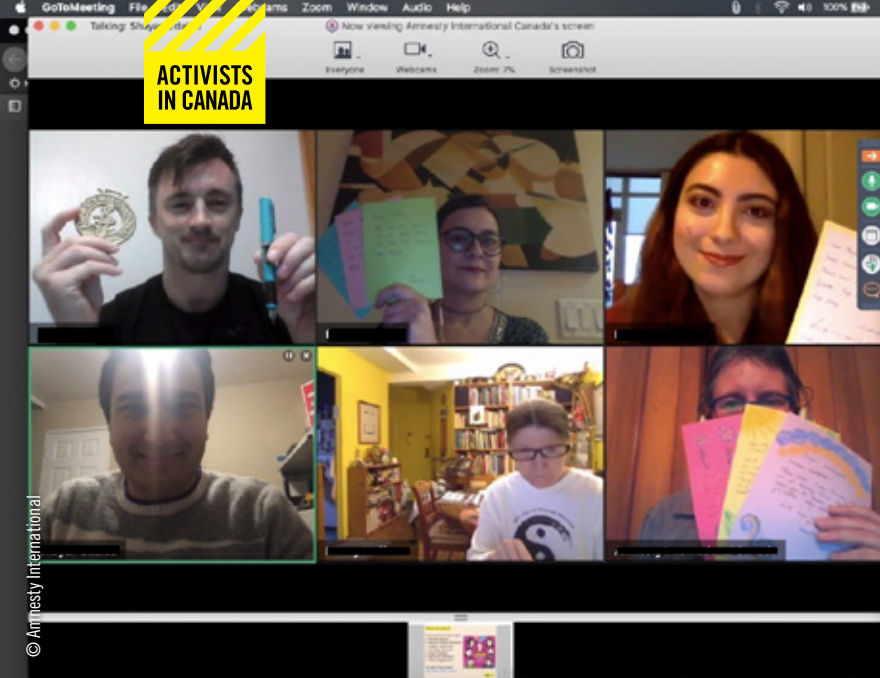
Amnesty International unequivocally supports frontline groups and activists in communities across the country who work courageously and tirelessly to expose that systemic racism and demand justice for the growing number of BIPOC who have been wrongly arrested, mistreated or killed by police across Canada. Communities have told officials what they need, and it isn't more enforcement.

TAKE ACTION

Write a letter to the Premier of your province or territory, and urge them to support new, transformative approaches to upholding public safety. Call for a comprehensive reform agenda that should:

- › ban the practices of carding, street checks, and racial profiling by police;
- › overhaul the approach to wellness checks;
- › refrain from additional funding for law enforcement;
- › consider significant reductions in spending on policing;
- › curtail militarization of police forces;
- › discontinue programs that put police in schools, ban the use of facial recognition technology by police for mass surveillance;
- › address the intersectionality that exists in policing Black women and Black trans individuals;
- › comprehensively overhaul police oversight;
- › and end all other harmful and racist policies and practices;

For the mailing address of your provincial or territorial Premier go to canadaspremiers.ca, or contact Amnesty's Supporter Services team at members@amnesty.ca or 1-800-266-3789.

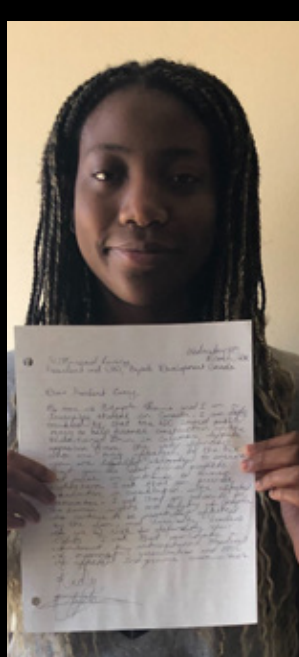
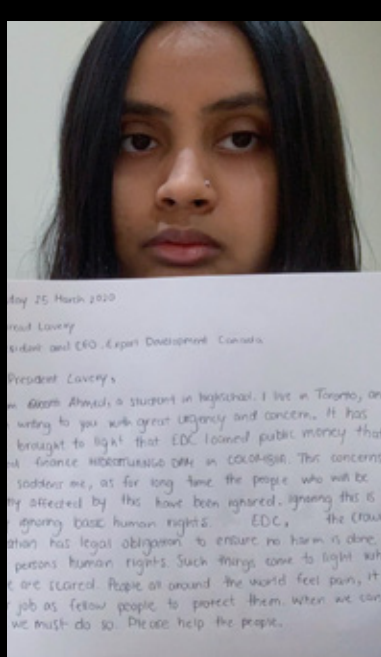
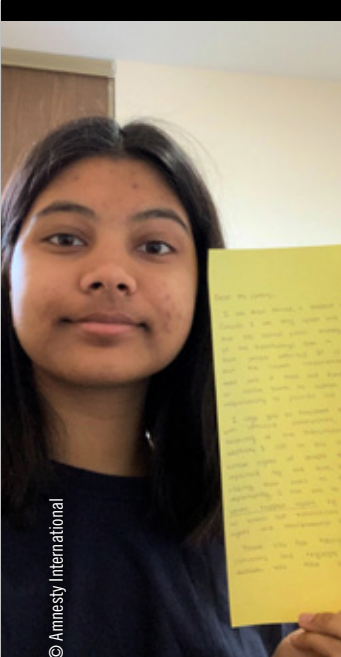


Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Amnesty International activists have moved online to rally, protest, and demand change. In March, Amnesty supporters organized an online celebration of Nowruz (Iranian New Year).

Activists marked Nowruz by writing letters in support of seven human rights defenders in prison in Iran.



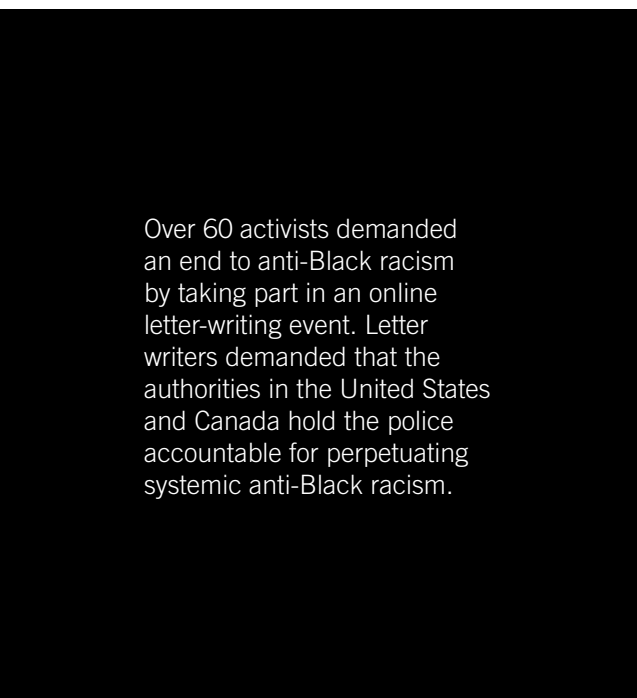
The “Changing lives with pen and keyboard” letter-writing event was held in July. Activists from across Canada gathered online to share stories about their human rights work and inspire one another



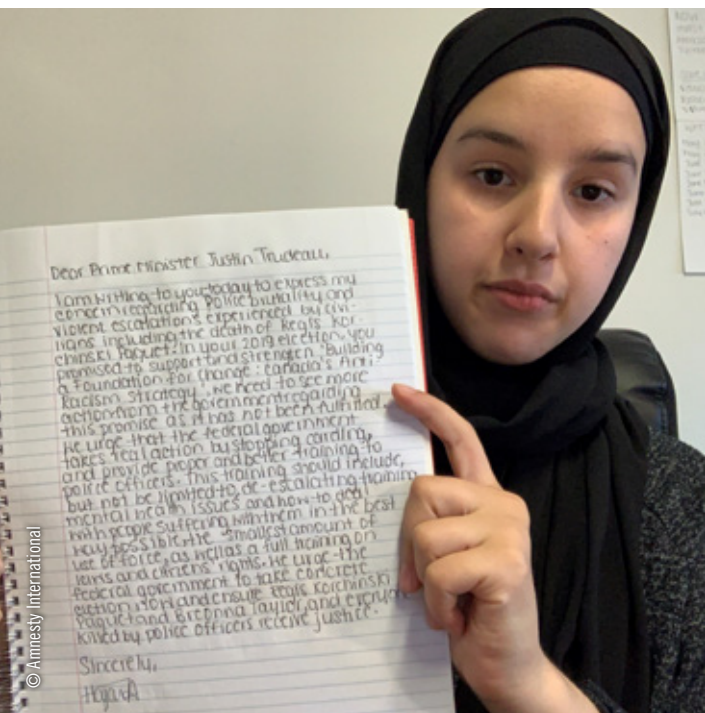
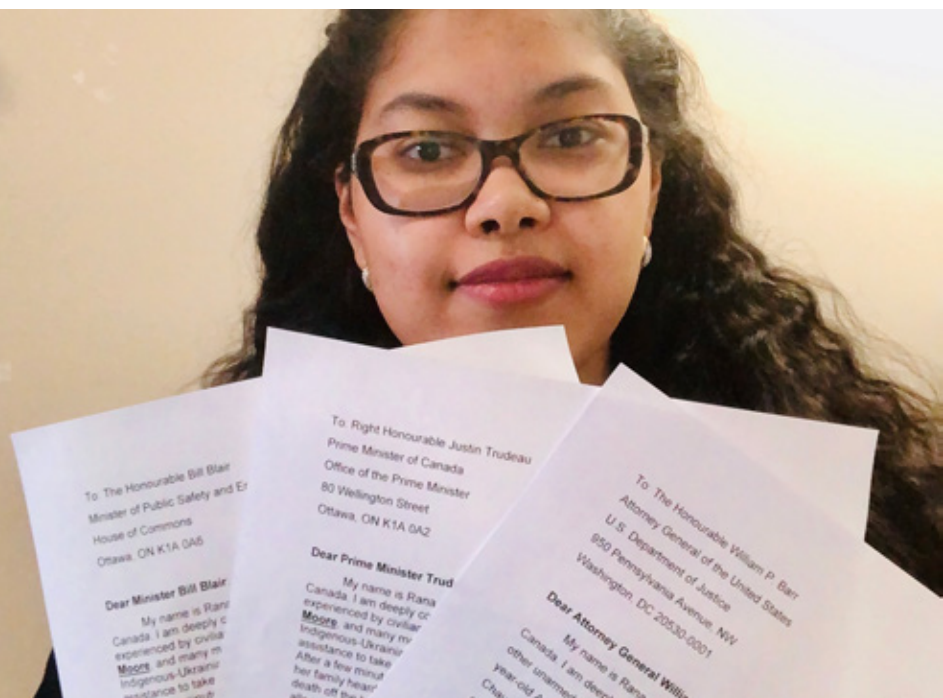
Amnesty International National Youth Organizers took action in support of the Ríos Vivos (Living Rivers) movement of Colombia. Members of Ríos Vivos have been threatened and attacked—with six leaders killed—as they spoke out against the environmental impacts of a huge dam project financed by Canada.

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Over 60 activists demanded an end to anti-Black racism by taking part in an online letter-writing event. Letter writers demanded that the authorities in the United States and Canada hold the police accountable for perpetuating systemic anti-Black racism.



© Amnesty International



The anti-Black racism letter-writing event was facilitated by Amnesty's National Youth Organizers. Participants posted photos of themselves to social media with their letters, which demanded justice for those who have been impacted by police brutality.

DON'T SEE YOURSELF ON THESE PAGES?

If you attend or organize an Amnesty International event in your community, please share your photographs with other Amnesty members across Canada. Email high-resolution images with captions to members@amnesty.ca

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GET A YOUTH AND STUDENT GROUP UP AND RUNNING IN YOUR SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY!

By Serisha Iyar
Amnesty International Youth Fellow

WHETHER YOU ARE getting your school, campus or community group up and running again for the new school year, or starting up a new group altogether, it is time to start planning and making sure you have everything to need for the new year!

If you are a returning group, make sure you fill out the 2020 group registration form and update your group record. You can also send a copy of your group executive or leadership for 2020/21 to youth@amnesty.ca

If you are interested in learning more about starting up a new group at your school or in your community, send an email to youth@amnesty.ca and we can help get you started and send you a copy of the new Youth Group Start-up Kit.

Registration is also now open for Amnesty Canada Youth and Student Groups. Sign up at amnesty.ca/youth-sign-up and you will receive a copy of the Youth and Student Group Start-Up Kit and we will connect you with a member of our National Youth Team for one-on-one support and training on getting your group up and running. You can also email us at youth@amnesty.ca for further information.

UPDATES FROM THE NATIONAL YOUTH ACTION AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NYAAC)

THE NYAAC is excited to announce that we have completed recruitment for the 2020-2022 team. We would like to thank all of the qualified and dedicated youth who applied for a position on the NYAAC.

Note that recruitment will happen annually in the Spring, so please keep an eye out for applications for the 2021-2023 team.

We are pleased to welcome Anam R., Brandon H., Hannah A., Shantel W., and Shriya S. to the team. Stay tuned to our Instagram [@amnestycanada](https://www.instagram.com/amnestycanada) and upcoming youth e-newsletters to learn more about our new members!

We are confident that these five new members will be able to take the NYAAC and youth advocacy to new heights within Amnesty International Canada!

To sign up for our newsletter or learn more about the NYAAC email siyar@amnesty.ca



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youth@amnesty.ca

JOIN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S FIELDWORKER PROGRAM

ARE YOU LOOKING for the next step in your activist journey? The Fieldworker Program is recruiting!

Fieldworkers are trained Amnesty volunteers who work across Canada to promote human rights activism at the grassroots level. Fieldworkers help and support individuals and Amnesty groups to carry out their human rights work.

In the Fieldworker Program, we emphasize skills training and education to support passionate individuals to foster grassroots activism within our communities. Some of the main skills we develop as Fieldworkers are public speaking, workshop design, and conflict resolution.

Tosha Mallette is an Amnesty member at her local group in Vernon, BC, as well as the Co-Chair of the Fieldworker Coordinating Committee.

When Tosha first joined Amnesty several years ago, she took part in monthly meetings and letter writing as a way to contribute to Amnesty's human rights work.

"The world of activism was new to me, but I knew I found the right place to turn my energy into action for human rights, both locally and globally," Tosha says. "When I found myself looking for a way to branch out further into my community, the Fieldworker Program was just what I needed, and it continues to help me grow in my activism journey."



Tosha Mallette is Co-Chair of Amnesty Canada's Fieldworker Coordinating Committee.

TAKE ACTION

- › To learn more about what fieldworkers do and how you can get involved, please go to amnesty.ca/fieldworker
- › If you've already decided you'd like apply to be a fieldworker, email Shauna MacLean at smaclean@amnesty.ca. We look forward to having you join the team!

AN OPPORTUNITY TO DONATE AND DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL has received an initial pledge of \$1 million from our long-time supporters, Alice and Grant Burton, who have challenged us to match their extraordinary gift and double the impact of their generous donation. They wish to assist Amnesty International in always being ready to respond to human rights crises and requests for help when they arise. So far, we have successfully raised almost \$100,000 towards this matching campaign.

100% of your donation to this special fund will go to human rights work—we are not allocating any administrative or fundraising costs to either the initial \$1 million pledge or the \$1 million in matching funds. 30% of your contribution will be directed to urgent international projects and 70% to work that is done from Canada, on both national and international human rights concerns.

To make a donation, please visit amnesty.ca/burtonfund or contact Naqib Sarwary at nsarwary@amnesty.ca.



A governance update from the Board of Amnesty International Canadian Section (English Speaking) to members, donors, activists, and volunteers.

GLOBAL STRATEGIC GOALS: HIGHLIGHTS OF CONSULTATION WITH CANADIAN MEMBERS

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is currently working on a new Global Strategy that will guide our work as an organization from 2021 to 2028. As part of this process, the movement has been seeking supporters' input on the draft Global Strategy.

The draft strategy outlines two priorities that will help inform our communications work, our brand, our growth, and our global campaigning agenda until 2028: Freedom of Expression and Civic Space, and Inequality and Discrimination.

Thank you to all supporters who have participated in the consultation process led by the Amnesty Canada Strategic Goals Advisory Committee this year. The Committee is composed of eight leaders spanning six provinces (one youth leader, one staff, three volunteer leaders, two Board Directors and the Board Chair).

On August 2, approximately 50 members gathered in an online video session to discuss the 2021–28 Global Strategy. A wide range of opinions and perspectives were expressed by participants and the Committee felt this session involved a good cross-section of Amnesty Canada supporters. The Committee was particularly happy to have strong youth representation at the meeting.

There was a highly engaged discussion in three breakout sessions where leaders in the movement shared perspectives and collaborated on solutions using virtual whiteboards on Zoom. This session complemented ongoing consultations with members, volunteer leaders, supporters, and Board members who shared their insights and feedback through emails, phone calls, and survey responses earlier in 2020.

The Strategic Goals Advisory Committee is delighted to have actively consulted with approximately 100 members through this process after receiving a limited response to the national survey distributed to 2,000 members this spring. As a next step, the Committee will undertake the planning process for Amnesty Canada's impending National Strategic Plan and communicate further information to members and supporters in early 2021.

MEMBERS' RESOLUTIONS: REPORT ON SPECIAL MEETING AND WORKING PARTY SESSIONS

WE ARE GRATEFUL that on August 29–30, 2020, sixty-five members and supporters attended a virtual Special Meeting and two working party sessions to discuss and vote on two resolutions brought forward by members that weren't able to be discussed in detail at the 2020 Annual General Meeting on June 6.

Fifty-five members and supporters attended the working party session to discuss Resolution A2020-1, which focused on convening a committee to examine and reduce the scope of Amnesty's work in Canada.

Thirty-eight members and supporters attended the second working party session to discuss Resolution B2020-1, which focused on conducting an accessibility audit of Amnesty International Canada, including physical offices, events, policies, governance, technology, and communications.

Fifty-four voting members participated in the plenary session. Resolution B2020-2 regarding an accessibility audit was passed, and Resolution A2020-1 regarding Amnesty's scope of work was not passed.

Thank you to the members who brought forward these resolutions and everyone who participated in these sessions—we truly appreciate your time and engagement with Amnesty Canada's governance process. We welcome any feedback you have on the sessions and the platform we used so we can continue to improve our virtual governance activities in the future.

As always, you can reach out to the Board at any time with questions by emailing board@amnesty.ca.

The Board would like to thank all members and supporters who participated in virtual consultations and governance sessions over the summer.



REF# 0376

2021 GIFT CATALOGUE



REF# 0377



REF# 0315

STAINLESS STRAW SET

\$10 each

GREETING CARDS

10 for \$14

DIARY/NOTEBOOK

\$20 each

WALL CALENDAR

\$16 each

LARGE CANVAS TOTE BAG

\$22 each



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SAFE THIRD COUNTRY AGREEMENT: AMNESTY WINS IN FEDERAL COURT!

By Justin Mohammed
Human Rights Law and Policy Campaigner

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA has, once again, won a case in Federal Court challenging the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA).

Justice Ann Marie McDonald presided over a five-day hearing in November 2019 and issued her judgement on July 22, 2020. In her ruling, she found that the Canadian law implementing the STCA is unconstitutional because it violates section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The STCA is an international agreement between Canada and the US. It requires refugee claimants to claim protection in the first country of arrival, subject to some exceptions. It is premised on the idea that the US is safe, and that refugee claimants will have access to a fair process for determining their claims there. Claimants in the US who try to claim refugee protection at official ports of entry in Canada are turned away.

WHAT DID THE FEDERAL COURT DECIDE?

Justice McDonald found that when Canada turns refugee protection claimants back to the US, it often results in violations of their rights to life, liberty, and security of the person found in section 7 of the *Charter*—rights which apply to all people present in Canada. The handover by Canadian officials to US officials means that even if violations are committed by the US, Canada is not absolved of responsibility.

Amnesty supporters have long called on Canada to respect the rights of refugees. In July, a Federal Court judge ruled that the Safe Third Country Agreement (a treaty concerning refugee claimants) between Canada and the US is unconstitutional.

One of these human rights violations is arbitrary immigration detention, which many STCA returnees face, often in deplorable conditions that amount to cruel and unusual treatment. To illustrate this point, Justice McDonald recalled the experiences of one claimant challenging the STCA, Ms. Mustefa, who, after being turned away by Canada, was placed in solitary confinement in a freezing cold cell and given food that is incompatible with her religious beliefs as a Muslim woman. The court said that Ms. Mustefa's treatment alone was sufficient to "shock the conscience." Although the decision focusses on US immigration detention, it also notes the risk of *refoulement* (sending a refugee claimant being sent back to their country of origin where they may face persecution).

WHAT'S NEXT?

The Court gave Parliament six months to change the law and respect the Charter, but the government has already decided to appeal meaning that Amnesty will be in court a little while longer. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to let the government know that human rights violations under the STCA must end immediately!

TAKE ACTION

- › Call on Canada to rescind the Safe Third Country Agreement immediately. Sign the online petition at [amnesty.ca/rescind_stca](https://www.amnesty.ca/rescind_stca)

A man harvests salt in the Salinas Grandes in Argentina. Mining companies are keen to exploit the lithium brine that lies underneath the salt flats. The environmental and human rights impacts could be devastating.

© Diego Leanza/Amnistía Internacional Argentina

ETHICAL BATTERIES: SUPPORT A JUST TRANSITION TO RENEWABLE ENERGY

By Tara Scurr
Business and Human Rights Campaigner

THIS OCTOBER, Amnesty International and Greenpeace will launch the Principles for a Greener and More Ethical Battery, targeting governments and tech companies. A cornerstone of Amnesty's commitment to a just transition to renewable energy in the transportation sector, the Ethical Battery project aims to end human rights violations in the production of rechargeable batteries.

Rechargeable batteries can be found in many of the electronics we use daily and the increasing popularity of electric vehicles has led to soaring demand for the production of lithium-ion batteries. Only a small number of countries hold the mineral reserves required to produce rechargeable batteries: Canada, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Argentina, Bolivia, and the Philippines among them. It is estimated that the Tesla Model S battery pack, for example, contains a whopping 63 kilograms of lithium in addition to other minerals. The race to secure stable sources of cobalt, nickel, lithium, and manganese is fiercely competitive.

This in turn puts tremendous pressure on governments to approve mineral exploitation licences. There are currently only two lithium projects underway in Argentina, but the government is facing pressure to approve more mines, fast. To ensure these minerals are mined with the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous peoples and use the Best Available Technologies (BAT) and Practices (BAP), governments must have adequate human rights and environmental

safeguards in place from the outset. [Gaps in human rights protections related to mining in the DRC](#), for instance, have led to horrific experiences of child labour, exposure to toxic processing chemicals, and mining accidents.

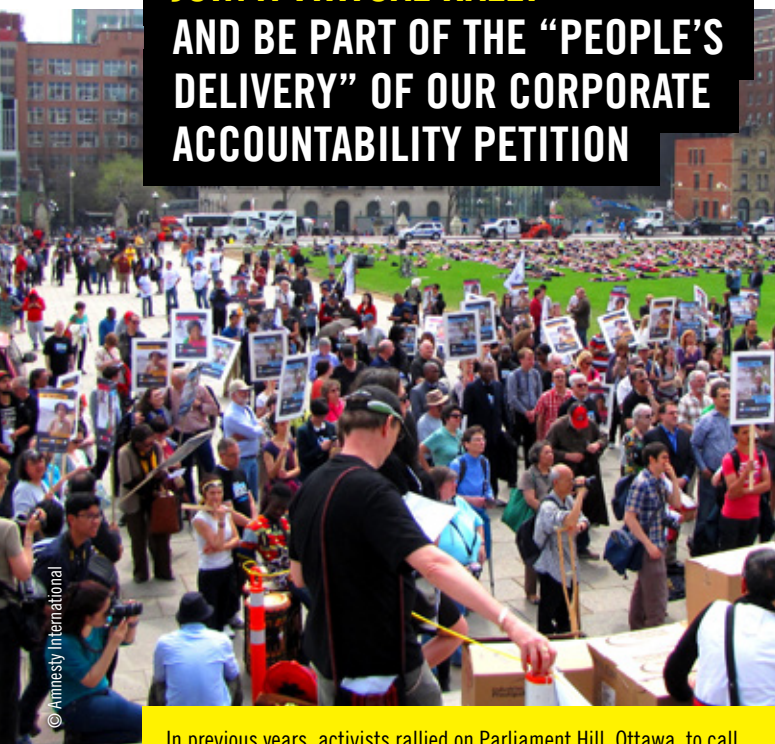
This October, Amnesty will also launch its COVID-delayed report on lithium extraction and the rights of Indigenous peoples in the Salinas Grandes and Lake Guayatayoc salt flats of Argentina. The report calls on the Argentine government to respect the rights of Indigenous peoples and the environment and to uphold its international human rights obligations. Visit Amnesty's [Business and Human Rights](#) page for links to the report and exciting new educational materials.

Please join Amnesty International this October in urgently calling upon innovators, governments, and ordinary people to ensure that our future is powered in a manner that respects human rights and the environment. It's no small order, but our future and our collective rights depend on it.

TAKE ACTION

- › For more information, please email Business and Human Rights campaigner Tara Scurr at tscurr@amnesty.ca.
- › To get involved with Amnesty's new Specialized Team on Climate Justice and Corporate Accountability, please email Elena Dumitru at edumitru@amnesty.ca.

JOIN A VIRTUAL RALLY AND BE PART OF THE “PEOPLE’S DELIVERY” OF OUR CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY PETITION



In previous years, activists rallied on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, to call for corporate accountability. This year, on October 18, you can join activists across Canada by participating in a virtual rally.

By Fiona Koza
Business and Human Rights Campaigner

THOUSANDS OF CANADIANS signed our parliamentary e-petition calling for concrete measures to strengthen the rules for Canadian businesses to uphold human rights.

On October 18, raise your voice for corporate accountability! Come together online with Canadians across the country for the Open for Justice campaign’s first ever virtual rally. Together, we will demand corporate accountability and symbolically deliver our petition to the House of Commons.

Tune in to hear from mining-affected communities, chant for change, and connect with a growing movement demanding Canadian corporations uphold human rights abroad.

One of the awesome things about a *virtual* rally on Parliament Hill is that you don’t have to live near Ottawa to participate. Everyone can join, from coast to coast.

TAKE ACTION

- › To register for this virtual rally, visit [amnesty.ca/virtual-rally](https://www.amnesty.ca/virtual-rally)

GET ACTIVE ON CLIMATE JUSTICE— JOIN AMNESTY’S NEW SPECIALIZED TEAM

THE CLIMATE CRISIS is a monumental threat to human rights, like nothing humanity has ever experienced before.

In September 2019, millions of people marched in climate strikes organized by youth around the world. The next global climate strike will take place virtually on Friday September 25, and we encourage you to participate.

We will be doing lots of other exciting stuff on climate justice this fall, including: a youth climate justice webinar on September 22; a climate 101 webinar on October 1; an e-petition to the Canadian government demanding strong climate action; a massive online course; social media actions; and more.

Governments have understandably been focused on COVID-19 lately, but the pandemic has not washed the climate emergency away. This is the moment to shape the future we want.



Climate strike protestors in the Philippines, September 20, 2019.

TAKE ACTION

- › Visit [amnesty.ca/climate-action](https://www.amnesty.ca/climate-action) to register for our climate webinars, to sign the e-petition, and for other climate actions.
- › Join Amnesty Canada’s brand-new Climate Justice and Corporate Accountability Specialized Team and help us raise awareness, lobby for climate action, find solutions, support environmental defenders, and more. To join this team, please contact Elena Dumitru at edumitru@amnesty.ca.

GUATEMALA AND COLOMBIA: NEW CAMPAIGNS SUPPORT ENVIRONMENT DEFENDERS

By Kathy Price
Campaigner for Guatemala and Colombia

COURAGEOUS LEADERS who defend land and water seek to protect the environment that is vital to the rights and survival of their communities. Such struggles are ever more urgent across Latin America amidst a climate crisis—and ever more dangerous, too. Environment defenders are experiencing increasing attacks aimed at paralyzing their efforts.

This dire reality has prompted two new Amnesty campaigns to support threatened environment defenders.

GUATEMALA: FREE BERNARDO CAAL XOL

© José del Aguila/Diario La Hora

Bernardo Caal Xol is a prisoner of conscience jailed for defending Indigenous rights and the environment.

MISUSE OF Guatemala's justice system to imprison Indigenous environment defenders is an all too common practice designed to paralyze their human rights work. This is happening at a time when Guatemala is experiencing devastating impacts of climate change, including water shortages, crop failures and famine.

Bernardo Caal Xol is a Maya Q'eqchi' teacher and trade unionist who was jailed for crimes he did not commit.

Trumped up charges against Caal Xol were made as he was successfully leading a peaceful struggle by communities seeking to protect the Cahabón River from big dam projects that violate indigenous rights, affect fish stocks and limit Indigenous communities' access to water. Caal Xol was convicted without evidence.

TAKE ACTION

In July, Amnesty declared Caal Xol a prisoner of conscience. Now our goal is to collect thousands of signatures on a petition to Guatemala's Attorney General calling for his release

- › Sign the E-petition at amnesty.ca/freebernardo
- › You can also write a letter to support this cause (see page 16).

COLOMBIA: STOP ATTACKS ON ENVIRONMENT DEFENDERS

PROTECT THOSE WHO
PROTECT US

Amnesty Canada is launching a new campaign in support of threatened environment defenders and their communities in Colombia.

INDIGENOUS and Afro-descendant defenders of territory and the environment in Colombia are facing a terrifying increase in attacks and assassinations. Hundreds have been killed in the last two years alone. As the bloodshed continues, women defenders face the additional threat of sexual violence against them or their daughters.

Colombian authorities promise programs to protect defenders and their communities yet fail to implement them. Meanwhile, companies are allowed to proceed with projects that damage the environment, violate rights, and fuel violence.

Amnesty Canada continues to advocate in support of members of the Rios Vivos Movement (Spanish for Living Rivers), persecuted for denouncing a disastrous big dam project financed with millions of dollars of public money by Export Development Canada.

This fall, Amnesty Canada will roll out a campaign focusing on four other emblematic cases of environment defenders in grave danger in Colombia. The goal is action to prevent further attacks.

TAKE ACTION

- › To support this campaign, visit amnesty.ca/colombiaSOS, or contact campaigner Kathy Price at kprice@amnesty.ca



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GUATEMALA: HELP RELEASE BERNARDO CAAL XOL

BERNARDO CAAL XOL is a Maya Q'eqchi' teacher and trade unionist who was wrongfully jailed after he took legal action against a big dam project on the Cahabón River that violates Indigenous rights. In retaliation for his actions, Bernardo Caal Xol was subjected to smear campaigns in the media.

The public prosecutor's office opened a criminal investigation against Bernardo for alleged acts of violence. In 2018, Bernardo was detained and sent to pretrial detention. Despite nothing to support the accusation, a court sentenced him to more than seven years in prison for aggravated theft and illegal detention.

Added to this miscarriage of justice, Caal Xol now faces the threat of COVID-19 contagion in jail. Amnesty International says Caal Xol is a prisoner of conscience and should be freed immediately.

TAKE ACTION

Write to Guatemala's Attorney General:

- › Express your concern that Bernardo Caal Xol was unjustly sentenced to more than seven years in jail for a crime he did not commit and without any evidence to substantiate the conviction;
- › Call for his immediate release because he is a prisoner of conscience who peacefully defended Indigenous rights and the environment;
- › Ask for an impartial investigation of the wrongful conviction and sanctions against the officials responsible for this miscarriage of justice.

WRITE TO:

Attorney General Consuelo Porras
c/o Alejandro Fajardo Estrada
Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Guatemala
130 Albert St, Suite 1010
Ottawa, ON K1P 5G4

EMAIL: carrecis@mp.gob.gt
embassy1@embaguate-canada.com

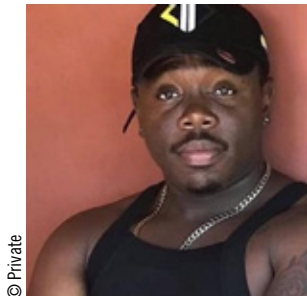
SEND A COPY TO:

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne
Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs
111 Wellington St
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

JOIN THE URGENT ACTION NETWORK

When an individual is in immediate danger of a human rights violation, Amnesty International mobilizes a dedicated group of letter-writers—the Urgent Action Network—to take action quickly to protect them. To join the network and receive regular Urgent Actions, send an e-mail to urgentaction@amnesty.ca with “I want to join” in the subject line.

HONDURAS: SPEAK OUT FOR “MISSING” GARIFUNA DEFENDERS



HEAVILY ARMED MEN in police uniforms arrived in vehicles with no licence plates and forced five black indigenous men from their homes in the Garifuna community of Triunfo de la Cruz on July 18, 2020. Their whereabouts remain unknown.

The disappeared men include the community's elected President Alberth Snider Centeno Tomas (pictured), Suami Aparicio Mejía García, Gerardo Mizael Rochez Cálix, Milton Joel Martínez Álvarez and Junior Rafael Juárez Mejía.

Four of the men belong to the Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras (OFRANEH), which defends the rights of Garifuna communities amid a longstanding pattern of persecution and land appropriation.

TAKE ACTION

Please write to the Honduran Security Minister:

- › Express grave concern about the disappearance of Alberth Snider Centeno Tomas, Suami Aparicio Mejía García, Gerardo Mizael Rochez Cálix, Milton Joel Martínez Álvarez and Junior Rafael Juárez Mejía;
- › Call for action to find the men;
- › Also call for an investigation to bring to justice those responsible for the disappearances.

WRITE TO:

Julián Pacheco Tinoco
Secretary of Security
El Ocotal, Comayaguela, M.D.C
Antiguo Local de Academia de Policía (ANAPO)
Honduras

SALUTATION: Dear Secretary

EMAIL: rafael.mayorga@seguridad.gob.hn

SEND A COPY TO:

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne
Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs
111 Wellington St
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

BANGLADESH: HELP FREE SHAFIQUK ISLAM KAJOL

SHAFIQUK ISLAM KAJOL, a Bangladeshi newspaper editor, faces indefinite pretrial detention under the draconian Digital Security Act (DSA). He is being held in the Dhaka Central Jail, a prison with more than 10,000 prisoners despite a capacity of just 4,000. It is believed Kajol was subjected to enforced disappearance.



On March 10, 2020, three unidentified men were seen tampering with the journalist's motorbike parked outside his office. Soon after, Kajol disappeared.

Kajol appears to have been disappeared solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression. He is a prisoner of conscience and he must be released immediately and unconditionally. The Bangladeshi authorities must also investigate the allegations that he was subjected to an enforced disappearance.

TAKE ACTION

Write to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh:

- › Ask her to instruct the Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary affairs to release Shafiquk Islam Kajol immediately and unconditionally, and close all investigations against him.

WRITE TO:

Prime Minister of Bangladesh
Ms. Sheikh Hasina, MP
Prime Minister's Office
Old Sangsad Bhaban
Tejgaon
Dhaka-1215
Bangladesh

EMAIL: ps1topm@pmo.gov.bd
psecy@pmo.gov.bd

SALUTATION: Her Excellency

SEND A COPY TO:

His Excellency Mizanur Rahman
High Commission for the People's Republic of Bangladesh
350 Sparks St, Suite 1100
Ottawa, ON K1R 7S8



YOU'RE INVITED TO A GLOBAL CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

On December 10, 2020—International Human Rights Day—Amnesty International supporters in Canada and around the world will be taking part in Write for Rights, the world's largest letter-writing event.

COVID-19 has impacted all of our lives, but it won't stop us from taking action. Your voice and your letters are needed now more than ever to take action on 10 critical global cases.



JOIN US. IT'S EASY TO TAKE PART!

Whether you want to organize an event with your social bubble, join a virtual letter-writing party, or write on your own, we're here to help.

REGISTER NOW FOR

WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2020

Go to writeathon.ca to sign up,
email us at writeathon@amnesty.ca,
or phone us at **1-800-266-3789**
to register or to find out more about
how to get involved.

