



December 2022

**Our Next Meeting:
December 10th
Potluck & Letter Writing
for Write for Rights**

We'll gather for a potluck and writing on Saturday, December 10th, Human Rights Day, at 2pm at the home of Marty Fromer & Mary Jo Cook 4662 SW Flower Place in Portland, Marty (971)-212-3590

For those that can't attend please see the Write for Rights link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/write-for-rights/>

**CELEBRATING 21 YEARS OF
WRITE FOR RIGHTS**

Write For Rights is Amnesty International's largest annual letter writing campaign. People around the world write letters on behalf of individuals who need urgent help. Through the power of collective grassroots action, your letters will help convince government officials to free individuals unjustly imprisoned, and to seek justice for past human rights abuses.

2022 Write for Rights: Jailed for Remembering Victims of Deadly Crackdown – Chow Hang-Tung (Hong Kong)

A brilliant student from a top university, Chow Hang-Tung could have pursued all sorts of high-flying careers. Instead, she has dedicated her life to fearlessly protecting people's rights as a human rights lawyer and activist.

Chow was the vice-chairperson of the Hong Kong Alliance, which organized the world's biggest candlelight vigil commemorating victims of the Tiananmen crackdown. In 1989, hundreds – possibly thousands – of people were killed in the streets around Tiananmen Square, Beijing, as troops opened fire, killing protesters peacefully calling for economic and social reforms. The Chinese government wants people to forget, but Chow has made it her mission to remember the victims.



In 2020 and 2021, Hong Kong authorities banned the vigil, citing public health reasons in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic. On June 4, 2021, Chow encouraged people on social media to commemorate the crackdown by lighting candles. She was arrested on that day for “advertising or publicizing unauthorized assembly”.

Chow is now serving 22 months in jail for peacefully remembering the victims of a horrific crackdown. She is also facing further imprisonment for allegedly endangering national security through her entirely peaceful actions. In the face of all this, Chow's bravery shines through. “To say I'm not afraid would be a lie, but I'm not so afraid I dare do nothing”, she says.

Write to the Hong Kong Authorities

**Secretary for Justice
Department of Justice
G/E, Main Wing, Justice Place
18 Lower Albert Road, Central, Hong Kong
Email: sjo@doj.gov.hk
Salutation: Dear Secretary for Justice**

Tell them to immediately release Chow Hang-tung and drop all charges, as she has been detained solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression.



Help Keep Chow's Spirit Strong

Send Chow your message of solidarity and hope. Draw pictures of cats and alpacas (Chow is a huge fan) to accompany your message.

Guidelines for letters to Chow: Please avoid mentioning Amnesty International or other overseas organizations. The Hong Kong Correctional Services Department will remove the envelope and may inspect the contents of the letter, so please do not include any content that may breach the law, such as revolution or jailbreaking. Write or print on plain papers (can be color paper). You can write as many pages as you prefer. Do not staple or use glue/glitter/stickers. Do not use foul language or include sensitive information. You may use a nickname as you see fit. There should be nothing but the letter itself in the envelope. If you would like to receive a reply, please include your address in the letter as the envelope will be removed before the letter reaches Chow. Please do not write her name or yours on the envelope.

Address:
PO Box No.75
Ma On Shan Post Office
New Territories, Hong Kong

In October 2022, AI Taiwan received a response they received from Chow on the solidarity actions that they sent to her. Here's the English translation of her response:

Dear Taiwanese friends who wrote me letters: Thank you for your letters. It feels so familiar seeing postcards from AI. I wrote a lot of postcards back then (I initiated the AI letters writing group when I was in the university). Life works in mysterious ways, I never thought I would become the recipient of AI's letters now. The dinosaurs, cats, and alpacas that you drew are really cute, and I especially like the cat that is all black except the two eyes (just like the one I have at home). With your support, how could I give up!

Journalists and Independent Monitors Are Being Silenced to Stifle Reporting of Protests

November 23, 2022--The Russian authorities have developed a sophisticated system of restrictions and severe reprisals to crush public protests, which extends to suppressing any reporting of them by journalists and independent monitors.

Restrictions have increased since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and the unbridled repression of the anti-war movement virtually precludes public protest and any sharing of information about it, said Amnesty International in a new report published today. The report, [Russia: "You will be arrested anyway": Reprisals against Monitors and Media Workers Reporting From Protests](#), documents dozens of cases of unlawful obstruction of journalists' and monitors' work during public protests, including arbitrary arrests, use of force, detentions and heavy fines.

"We can see that the Russian authorities are hell-bent not only on preventing and severely penalizing any protest, however peaceful, but also on minimizing any public awareness of it," said Natalia Prilutskaya, Amnesty International's Russia Researcher.

"From the very beginning of Vladimir Putin's presidency in 2000, the Russian authorities have been gradually limiting the right to peaceful protest, have increasingly penalized those who try to exercise it, making Russia a virtually protest-free zone. In February 2022, tens of thousands defied the prospect of extortionate fines and imprisonment and took to the streets of Russian cities in protest against the invasion of Ukraine. The authorities responded by issuing the heaviest penalties available against many participants. The police used brutal force against media workers and monitors observing and independently reporting on the protests.

"The authorities used the same approach a year earlier at protests in support of the wrongfully imprisoned opposition leader, Aleksei Navalny. By denying the public any knowledge about protests and obstructing their monitoring, the Kremlin is seeking to eradicate any public expression of discontent."

AIUSA Group 48

<https://aipdx.org>
www.facebook.com/aiustg48/

Group Coordinators

**Marty Fromer
and Terrie Rodello**

Treasurer

Tena Hoke

tena.hoke@gmail.com

Newsletter

Daniel Webb

pdx.videozine@gmail.com

OR Area Coordinator

Marty Fromer

martyfromer@gmail.com

Indonesia

Max White

maxw33@comcast.net

Prisoners' Cases

Jane Kristof

kristofj@pdx.edu

Concert Tabling

Will Ware

ww_ware@yahoo.com

Central Africa/ OR State Death Penalty Abolition

Terrie Rodello

tarodello@igc.org

www.amnestyusa.org

Postage Rates

Within the United States

\$0.58 - Domestic Letter up to 1oz,
standard envelope size

\$0.40 - Domestic Postcard

International Postage

\$1.30 - Up to 1 oz

Over the last several years, the Russian authorities have set up a legislative system which restricts freedom of expression and severely elevates the risks faced by observers, journalists and other media workers reporting on public assemblies.

The law requires journalists at protests to wear “clearly visible insignia of a mass media representative”. However, police have increasingly made additional demands, including for “editorial assignment letters” or passports from media workers covering public assemblies. The authorities have warned media workers against “participation” in upcoming protests, and have arbitrarily arrested journalists before, during and after rallies they reported from. In many cases, arrests were carried out with excessive and unlawful force which could amount to torture and other ill-treatment.

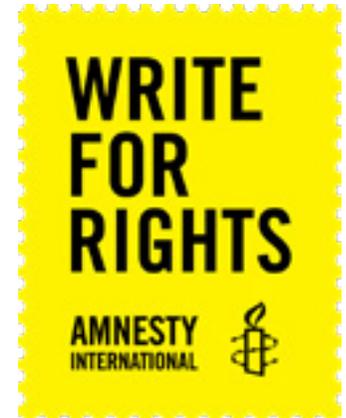
“Alongside severe legal restrictions on media freedoms already imposed by the state, police are increasingly acting arbitrarily to prevent journalists and other media workers informing the public about the protests,” said Natalia Prilutskaya.

According to the independent Union of Journalists and Media Workers (which was closed by a court order in September 2022), at least 16 reporters were arrested within a week after mass protests erupted on January 23, 2021 against the jailing of Aleksei Navalny. Seven staff members of the Committee Against Torture, a prominent Russian human rights NGO, were arbitrarily arrested, in some cases with force, while monitoring the protests. In many of these and other cases, media workers and protest monitors stood trial for “participation in an unauthorized public assembly” and were issued with fines or sentenced to 10 days or longer terms of so-called administrative detention.

Reprisals against public watchdogs and media workers escalated further after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. On March 4, 2022, new legislation was adopted further restricting the right to freedom of expression. At the time of writing, the authorities had initiated criminal proceedings against at least nine journalists and bloggers under the then-introduced offence of “disseminating false information about the Russian Armed Forces” (Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code). Some media outlets and journalists have also been penalized under another new “offence”, that of “discrediting” the Russian Armed Forces deployed abroad (Article 20.3.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences) after they shared information about the war in Ukraine.

Under the new legislation, a media report containing any anti-war message became a possible reason for persecution. In June and July 2022, Vechernie Vedomosti, an independent media outlet in Yekaterinburg and its publisher, Guzel Aitukova, were fined 450,000 rubles (US\$ 7,240) for the publication of a partially blurred photo of anti-war stickers and of other visuals opposing the invasion.

In two other instances, several members of the news teams at Dovod, an independent online media outlet in Vladimir, and Pskovskaya Guber-



niya, a newspaper in Pskov, were targeted for their coverage of anti-war protests.

On March 5, police searched the homes of Dovod's editor-in-chief Kirill Ishutin and three other journalists – including 17-year-old Evgeny Sautin – putatively as witnesses in a criminal investigation into “vandalism” in connection with the appearance of anti-war graffiti on a local bridge, which was first reported by Dovod. On the same day, police and special riot police broke into the office of Pskovskaya Gubernia, conducted searches and confiscated computers, phones and other equipment, as part of an administrative case involving the “offence” of “discrediting” the Russian Armed Forces deployed abroad, which had been introduced into law a day earlier. According to an anonymous complaint, the newspaper had allegedly called for mass protests in its email newsletter. The next day, Pskovskaya Gubernia announced that it had had to suspend its work until further notice.

The relentless attacks on the free press for covering the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the activities of the anti-war movement have led to an exodus of hundreds of journalists from Russia. The independent TV channel TV Rain and the Novaya Gazeta newspaper were among those forced to halt their work. Radio station Ekho Moskvyy, which served as a platform for some of the most critical voices in Russia, was closed down by the authorities. Their respective teams had to seek new ways of working to inform Russian audiences.

The appalling practices targeting peaceful protesters, reporters and independent monitors must end immediately. The repressive Russian laws, restricting freedom of expression, must be abolished.

“As long as Russia's government is able to strangle rights and freedoms within the country, and remains on the path of self-isolation, appalling abuses across the board will continue, including the crime of aggression against Ukraine,” said Natalia Prilutskaya.

“Close and effective scrutiny by the international community is required. In times as dark as these it is paramount to extend a helping hand to beleaguered Russian civil society and independent media, to help those who monitor and report abuses within the country and to tell the world about them.”

Amnesty International USA Statement on U.S. District Court Vacating Title 42

In response to yesterday's court ruling vacating Title 42, Amnesty International USA's Amy Fischer, Americas Advocacy Director, issues the following statement:

With yesterday's decision by the U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia finally vacating Title 42, the Department of Justice must ensure that asylum is fully restored. Today's step forward in no way diminishes the urgency for the Biden Administration to recognize and facilitate asylum seekers'



right to seek asylum without relying on detention, surveillance, border militarization or other tactics intended to criminalize people or deter them from exercising their human right to seek safety. Instead, the U.S. must invest in community based support to welcome asylum seekers into their new communities while respecting and protecting their dignity and human rights.

Title 42 was never about public health, it was always a racist ploy to weaponize the COVID-19 pandemic to block the human right to seek asylum – a right enshrined under both U.S. and international law. The decision vacating Title 42 should serve as a stark reminder to the Biden Administration, Congress, and future administrations that the right to seek asylum is non-negotiable.

Over 2 million people were expelled under Title 42 either back to Mexico where they were subject to violent attacks including rape, kidnapping, and assault, or sent back to the very danger and persecution they fled in their home countries. Black, Brown and Indigenous people were particularly harmed under Title 42. Over 25,000 Haitians were expelled to a humanitarian crisis in Haiti, mostly under Title 42. In September of this year, Amnesty International released the report, “‘They Did Not Treat Us Like People’: Race and Migration-Related Torture and Other Ill-Treatment of Haitians Seeking Safety in the USA” that found that U.S. authorities subjected Haitian asylum seekers expelled under Title 42 to arbitrary detention and discriminatory and humiliating ill-treatment that amounts to race-based torture.

Urgent Action Israel / OPT: Occupied Territories Palestinian Lawyer's Detention Extended

NAME AND PRONOUN: Salah Hammouri (he/his)

French-Palestinian lawyer Salah Hammouri remains held without charge or trial in Israel after suspending his 19-day-long hunger strike in protest at the renewal of his administrative detention. The human rights defender has faced persistent harassment by the Israeli authorities since 2002, including action to revoke his Jerusalem residency status and ongoing administrative detention since March 2022. He spent 15 days in solitary confinement in a dirty, small, and windowless cell without contact with the outside world as punishment for going on hunger strike, together with 29 other Palestinian detainees. The Israeli authorities must immediately release Salah Hammouri unless he is promptly charged and ensure that he is allowed to keep his residency status in Jerusalem and continue his human rights work without fear of reprisals.

Salah Hammouri is a French-Palestinian lawyer who lives in the neighbourhood of Kufr Aqab in East Jerusalem. He holds a Jerusalem residency permit and works as a field researcher for Addameer, a legal aid and prisoners' rights NGO that, together with five other civil society groups, was baselessly declared by the Israeli government a "terrorist organization" in October 2021. UN human rights experts condemned this move as a misuse of counter-terrorism measures and a "frontal attack on the Palestinian human rights movement, and on human rights everywhere". The Israeli authorities have persistently harassed and targeted Salah Hammouri. Since 2000, Israeli authorities have detained Salah Hammouri multiple times, including twice when he was placed under administrative detention – for five months in 2004 and for 13 months in 2017 and 2018.

Israeli authorities have also violated his rights to freedom of movement and to family. He is also at risk of forcible deportation as the Israeli authorities have taken action to revoke his Jerusalem residency status. On September 3, 2020, the Israeli Ministry of Interior notified Salah Hammouri of its intention to revoke his permanent residency status on the grounds of "breach of allegiance" to the State of Israel. Salah Hammouri awaits a final ruling by the Israeli High Court, after

exhausting the appeals process. According to his lawyer, there is concern that this most recent administrative detention order will be used against him to expedite actions towards his forcible deportation. On July 26, 2022, he was moved to a high-security prison – Hadarim – and was classified as a "high-security risk" prisoner. On September 25, 2022, he joined a mass hunger strike by 30 Palestinian administrative detainees to protest Israel's unjust and cruel practice of administrative detention. He was placed in punitive solitary confinement as a result. He was detained in a dirty and pest-infested isolation cell measuring approximately four-square metres, without access to open air or natural light for 15 days. He was deprived of any contact with the outside world and was under permanent video surveillance during that time. In addition, he faced pressure by Israeli prison officials, who told him that if he accepted to leave his hometown – Jerusalem – and go to France, this detention would end.

In 2021, Salah Hammouri—along with five other Palestinian human rights defenders—was hacked with Pegasus, a spyware developed by Israeli cyber-surveillance company NSO Group.

Under administrative detention, individuals are detained by Israeli state authorities without intent to prosecute them in a criminal trial. Orders can be renewed indefinitely, and evidence is kept secret, meaning that detainees are not able to effectively challenge their detention and do not know when they will be released. From January 1, 2022 until July 1, 2022, hundreds of Palestinians held in administrative detention, including Salah, have boycotted Israeli military courts in protest at their detention without charge or trial.

Evidence collected by Amnesty International and other human rights groups over decades indicates that administrative detention is used as an intentional Israeli policy to detain individuals, including prisoners of conscience held solely for the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and association and to punish them for their views and activism challenging the policies of occupation. According to Addameer, as of October 10, 2022, there were around 800 Palestin-



ian administrative detainees, including three Palestinian Legislative Council members, held indefinitely in Israeli prisons without charge or trial. There were two women and six children amongst the total number of those held in administrative detention; the rest were men.

Sample Letter

Dear Minister,

I am writing to express grave concern at the punitive arbitrary detention, without charge or trial, and ongoing harassment of French-Palestinian lawyer Salah Hammouri. On March 7th, 2022 he was arrested and on March 10, 2022, the Military Commander of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) in the occupied West Bank issued a three-month administrative order, extending his detention without charge or trial until June 6, 2022 and without any means to effectively challenge the detention. The detention order was renewed twice since then, most recently on September 4, 2022, merely hours before Salah Hammouri's expected release, and is now set to expire on December 4, 2022.

During this period, on July 26, 2022 the Israeli Prison Services forcibly transferred Salah Hammouri to Hadarim prison after classifying him as a high-risk security prisoner (also known as "Sagav" in Hebrew). The transfer occurred shortly after he wrote an open letter to French President Emmanuel Macron, raising concern that he was being punished for his peaceful activism. On September 25th, 2022, Salah Hammouri went on hunger strike together with 29 Palestinian administrative detainees to protest Israel's widespread and systematic use of this cruel and unjust form of detention. As punishment for his hunger strike, on September 28th, 2022, he was moved into solitary confinement in a dirty isolation cell measuring only four-square metres, without access to open air or light for 15 days and deprived of any contact with the outside world.

Furthermore, I remain concerned that Salah Hammouri faces a real risk of deportation following Israeli authorities' actions since September 2020 to revoke his permanent residency status, with his administrative detention order being used against him to expedite actions towards his forcible deportation. According to his lawyer, while Salah Hammouri was in solitary confinement, he was pressured by Israeli prison officials, who told him that if he accepted to leave Jerusalem and go to France, he would be released.

I urge you to immediately release Salah Hammouri and all others who have been placed under administrative detention, unless they are promptly charged with an internationally recognizable crime and tried in proceedings that adhere to international fair trial standards. I urge the authorities to ensure that he is allowed to keep his residency status in Jerusalem and continue with his human rights work without fear of reprisals.

Yours sincerely,

TAKE ACTION:

1. Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
2. Click [here](#) to let us know the actions you took on Urgent Action 22.22. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

Minister of Defense, Benny Gantz

Ministry of Defense
37 Kaplan Street, Hakiryia
Tel Aviv 61909, Israel
Fax: 972-3-6916940
Email: bgantz@knesset.gov.il
Twitter: @gantzbe
Salutation: Dear Minister,

Ambassador Michael Herzog

Embassy of Israel
3514 International Drive NW,
Washington, DC 20008
Phone: 202 364 5500
Email: info@washington.mfa.gov.il
Twitter: @IsraelinUSA ; @ambherzog
Facebook: @IsraelinUSA

Please take action as soon as possible until December 26th, 2022. Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.