

SCHOOL ACTION PACK

OCTOBER 2011

Welcome to the Utopia homelands

Syria in crisis

Shine a light for our
50th anniversary

50 YEARS
AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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CAMPAIGN ACTIONS: AT A GLANCE

Campaign	Action	Target
Homelands	Write a message of support	Alyawarr and Anmatyerr Peoples of the Utopia homelands in the Northern Territory
Crisis Response	Make flowers to show support for the people of Syria	The UN Security Council
Amnesty International at 50	Shine a light on people unfairly imprisoned	Various

Cover: (left to right) Leevina Kngwarrey, Jermone Kemarr and Joseline Kemarr on their traditional homelands.
© AI. Photo credit: April Pyle

Amnesty International is part of the global movement defending human rights and dignity. We work with people in Australia and our region to demand respect for human rights and protect people facing abuse. We campaign, conduct research and raise money for our work. Our active members, such as school action groups, play a vital role in achieving our aims through writing letters, sending online actions, organising creative awareness-raising activities and fundraising in their communities.

SCHOOL CONFERENCES SPARK IDEAS FEST!

Amnesty International ran workshops and discussed campaigning ideas with hundreds of school students at the school conference held in Queensland in the first half of this year. We also conducted presentations about refugees and asylum seekers to school students at the Fairer World Festival in Tasmania.

These events were a huge success; we taught students the facts about asylum seekers who arrive by boat and spread the word about Amnesty International's work.

2012 will see us working in even more regions to hold school conferences. If your school is keen to host or attend a conference, please ring 1300 300 920 or email youth@amnesty.org.au



Sunshine Coast Grammar School
© Sunshine Coast Grammar School



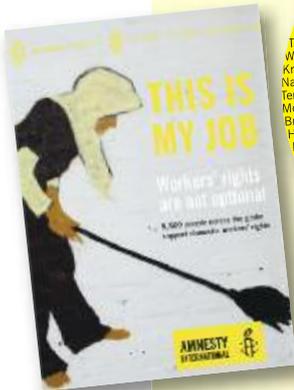
INDONESIAN DOMESTIC WORKERS DEMAND DIGNITY

Thank you to everyone who created stencils of solidarity for domestic workers, with statements in Bahasa! We have sent your pictures to the Indonesian embassy in Canberra to add your voice to this important global campaign. You have worked towards ensuring that 2.6 million vulnerable Indonesian girls and women are not working in someone else's home without the rights and protection they deserve.

In September we worked with our Indonesian partner organisation, Jala PRT, in rallying and lobbying the Indonesian Government to pass domestic worker protection laws. Amnesty International created an amazing banner displaying the names of 5,800 people who support domestic worker rights in Indonesia. The banner will soon be handed to the Indonesian Government to show how much people care for girls and women just like Lenny, the 14-year-old domestic worker featured in term two's school action pack.

Above: A domestic worker performs her daily tasks. © Rumpun Gema Perempuan
Right: Australian school students took action to protect domestic workers. Their stencils were sent to our partner organisation to show support.
Below: The banner to be handed to the Indonesian Government.

- Hargreaves, Molee May,
- Stephen Pennells, Paul Mulroney, Aimee Novelle, Tamzen Armer, Allan Brown, Paula Rebetz, Alana Parrott-Jolly, Maureen Andrews, Chris Ernst, Melanie Baird, Paul Hick, Alan Aldred, Phil McIntyre, Carmel & Peter, Jessica Simpson, Jon Piasente, Frances Hadfield, Melanie Gray, John Rawson, Eliza Berlage, M. Therese Virtue OAM, Brett Morrison, William Brooks, Alex Knights, Kristy Shepherd, Arthur, Nazaryan, Rosalind, Terry, Loqui, Paul McDonald, Ron Brown, Jennifer Sims, Heather MacWilliam, Kate Harrington-O'Brien, Ludwig, Heinrich, Tom Moore, Christine Germain, Paul Shearer, Fiona, Evangeline, Jenny Hughes, Christopher, George, Gillian Howell, Kim Cockatoo, Laura, Ethna Brown, Anne Wyld, Julia, Sally Genser, Pamela French, Maria, Rebecca, Jennifer H. Gerrand, Tim Dymond, Clare Locke, Christ Jones, Wendy, Lyell Scott, Kelly, Kerry, Tracey Holmes, M. Beauchamp



YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2011...

Students have had a significant influence on our campaigning and activism in 2011.

YOU GAVE HOPE TO REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

A big thank you to all who have been working so hard at changing the conversation about asylum seekers and refugees arriving by boat.

Hundreds of handmade and handwritten conversation cards came from students across the country. These cards have been delivered to people currently in detention and were very positively received. They got a long way in giving hope to people in detention.



Habibo, 25, with the youngest of her four children, one-year-old Rakmo, in Galkayo, May 2011. The family arrived in Galkayo after fleeing fighting in the Somali capital, Mogadishu. © UNHCR/R. Gangale

YOU WORKED ON THE FLIP PROJECT

In term two, New South Wales school students got together for the Flip Project, in which students filmed each other as they talked about what home means to them and what seeking asylum means.

The students received some training from an Amnesty International activist, but they did a fantastic job at working independently to produce some amazing films.

This creative activism is just one example of how we can change the conversation about asylum seekers in unique ways.



Students gather to work on the Flip Project. © AI



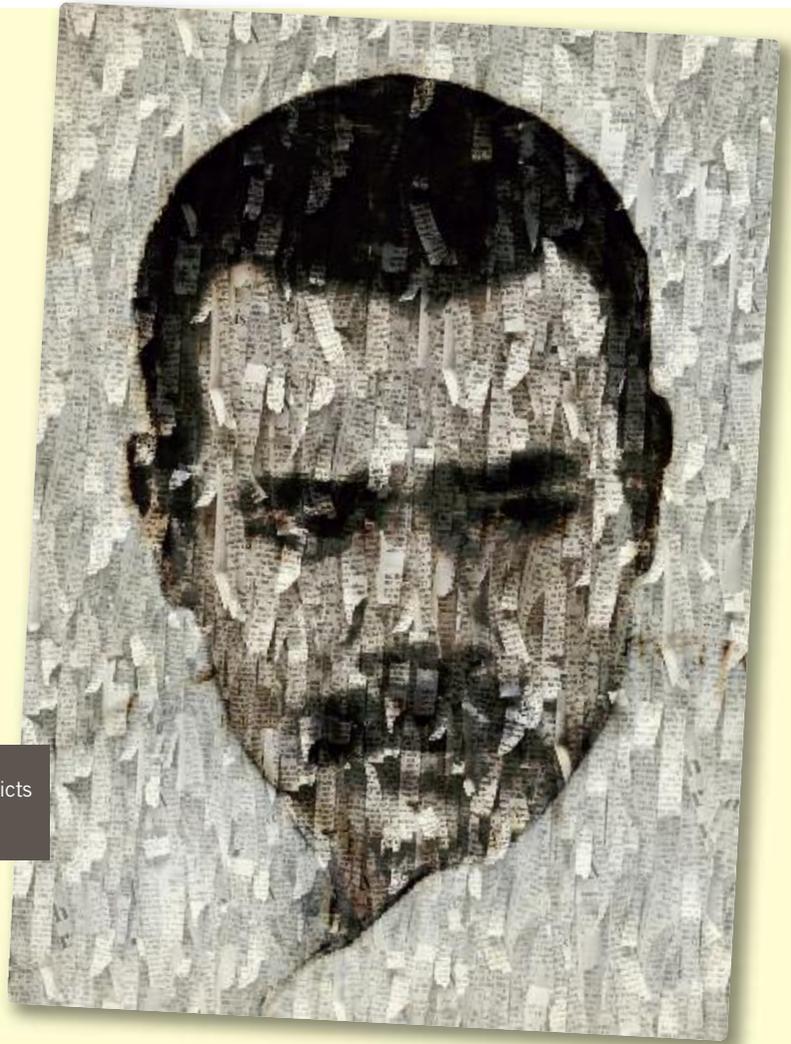
YOU HELPED FREE ABUZAR AL AMIN

Students made cards and wrote letters on behalf of detained Sudanese journalist Abuzar Al Amin, one of our priority individuals at risk cases for 2011.

Abuzar Al Amin was arrested after publishing election-related articles in May 2010, simply for exercising his right to freedom of expression. A number of Abuzar Al Amin's colleagues were also arrested and his newspaper's office raided and shut down.

Thanks in part to your support Abuzar Al Amin has now been released!

An image developed to promote Abuzar Al Amin's plight that depicts him in newspaper shreds. Design: Clinton Francis © AI



YOU HELPED CAMPAIGN FOR EQUALITY IN IRAN

We have worked throughout 2011 to support women campaigning for equal rights in Iran, with lots of help from school students.

In August, Amnesty International handed a petition to the Iranian embassy in Canberra demanding equal rights for Iranian women. The petition contained more than 10,000 signatures.

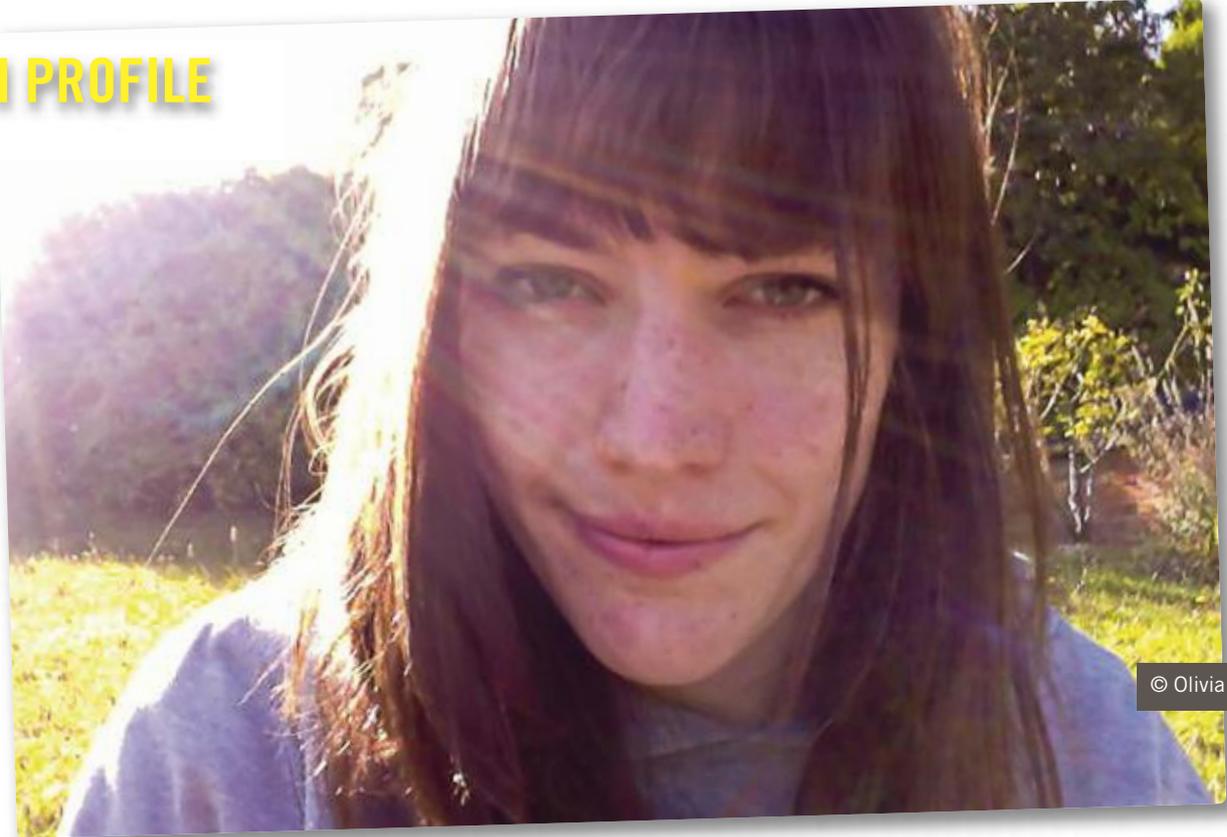
Campaign for Equality is a grassroots movement of Iranian women and men working together to put an end to laws that discriminate against women. They are under constant threat of arrest and imprisonment because of this work.



Sunshine Coast Grammar School
Amnesty International Group's
Campaign for Equality posters.
© Sunshine Coast Grammar School
Amnesty International Group

THANK YOU!

YOUTH PROFILE



© Olivia Ridley

Getting involved in your school action group is just the first step in your relationship with Amnesty International. Take, for example, Tasmanian youth activist Olivia Ridley. Just like you, she first became involved with Amnesty International at school and now continues to work with us.

OLIVIA RIDLEY

AGE: 22

Tell us about yourself

I am a fourth year Arts/Law student, majoring in International Relations, at the University of Tasmania. I have a serious Facebook addiction and I think it's fair to say that there are two things in life for which I get overly keen: human rights and Harry Potter.

How did you get involved at Amnesty International?

I've always had a keen sense of social justice, so in 2004 when my teacher asked if I was interested in attending an 'all schools' Amnesty International meeting, I was keen to suss it out. I took a friend with me and have been involved ever since.

What do you do with Amnesty International now?

I volunteer with Amnesty International on the Legal Amnesty International Campus Group at the University of Tasmania and I am also a part of the Youth Advisory Group as one of two Tasmanian members.

What is your favourite memory of Amnesty International?

When the Tasmanian Schools Group did a joint action in relation to Guantánamo Bay. A friend and I dressed in a super-attractive orange jumpsuit, then we went out and spoke to the public about the human rights abuses in Guantánamo Bay. I'm not sure if it was the jumpsuit or the people we spoke with being really supportive of the campaign and our efforts, but it felt a little bit amazing.

My motivation for being a part of Amnesty International is ...

I think it's really easy to be disheartened about the injustice that happens in Australia and around the world. As you might expect, some people you meet don't understand why you bother or why you care as much as you do. Personally, I take action because I believe that injustice continues when people say and do nothing, and that doing nothing has a significant negative impact on human rights.

By being a volunteer for Amnesty International and just being involved, I know I can give human rights a fair chance.



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Welcome to the Utopia homelands

In August, Amnesty International launched a new campaign asking the government not to cut vital services such as health, education and housing in the traditional lands that Aboriginal people call home.

These sacred lands, where Aboriginal people have lived for thousands of years and are strongly connected to, are called 'homelands'. A new report about homelands and their significance to Aboriginal people accompanies the campaign. Titled *The land holds us: Aboriginal Peoples' right to traditional homelands in the Northern Territory*, the report highlights how intrinsic homelands are to Aboriginal Peoples' health, culture, families and livelihoods.

WHAT ARE HOMELANDS?

For many decades, government policies forced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples off their traditional lands and into missions and towns – a process referred to as assimilation.

In the 1960s, small groups of Aboriginal people, usually families or other closely-related people, began relocating back to and establishing communities on their traditional lands and waters. This became known as the homelands movement.

BENEFITS OF HOMELANDS

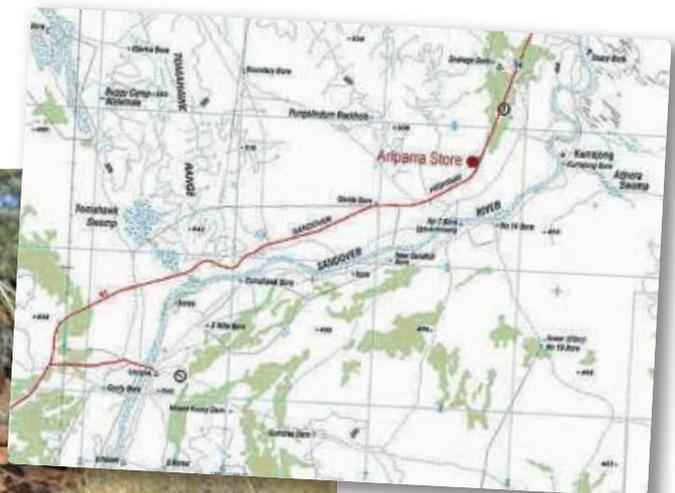
By raising their families on homelands, Aboriginal Peoples are able to maintain their deep spiritual connection to their land and culture. It allows Aboriginal Peoples to have more control over their lives: traditional languages are spoken, traditional governance structures are used and language and culture can be passed down to future generations.

Research shows that there are also significant health and social benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples living on homelands. This is particularly true for people living in the Utopia homelands in the central desert of the Northern Territory. In Utopia, adult mortality rates are 40 per cent lower than among other Aboriginal People in the Northern Territory.¹



We always said pmerel atnyenem, we never said pmer nhenh tha atnyenem. That means country owns or holds you, not you holding the country and becoming master of the land. The land was your mother, your father and everything else.

Rosalie Kunoth-Monks
Alyawarr/Anmatyerr elder,
Utopia homelands



Above: Map showing the 16 communities of the Utopia homelands.
Left: Pwerl from Camel Camp. Photo credit: April Pyle. © AI

1. Medical Journal of Australia, 2008

I AM MY HOMELANDS

During our time in Utopia we have met dozens of people who have shared their sacred places and their stories with us. Time and time again these people demonstrated that Aboriginal Peoples are healthier and live longer when they can stay connected to their homelands.

KATHLEEN NGAL

I am an Anmatyerr woman living at Camel Camp. Born sometime around 1933, I am the oldest living generation on the Utopia homelands.

I have a great responsibility to educate my family and my community about our history and the stories of our country.

I am also an artist, exhibited in Milan, Tokyo, London and Sydney. My paintings are 'maps' of our country. Through my art I am educating the world about my country and my culture.

I cannot paint when I'm not on my land. My art exists because of my connection to my homelands. My home and everything it means cannot be moved or rebuilt elsewhere.

My homeland is a place where I can work, live, raise my family and continue my traditions. I would like my children and grandchildren to have the chance to live on their country, to know the stories and be healthy, safe and secure.

All photos: © AI. Photo credit: April Pyle

'MOTORBIKE PADDY' NGAL

I'm an Anmatyerr man from Camel Camp. I am the oldest living generation on the Utopia homelands and a kwertengel 'manager' of my country.

I have lived here all my life. I saw our first contact with white pastoralists and worked on the first big cattle stations on this land. I saw Anmatyerr and Alyawarr leaders win land rights in the 1970s under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

I spent my working life as a stockman, fencer, I dropped bores and worked on pastoral stations as a mechanic. I am still the local 'bush mechanic'.

I'm also the custodian of my country's knowledge and history: its sacred sites, ancient rock art and bush medicines.

It's a good life. There is kerr (bush meat, like kangaroo, goanna) everyday here, I sometimes go shooting and hunting while the old ladies do their painting.

I live here, I grew up here: this is my country. We don't own this country, this country owns us; we belong to this country.

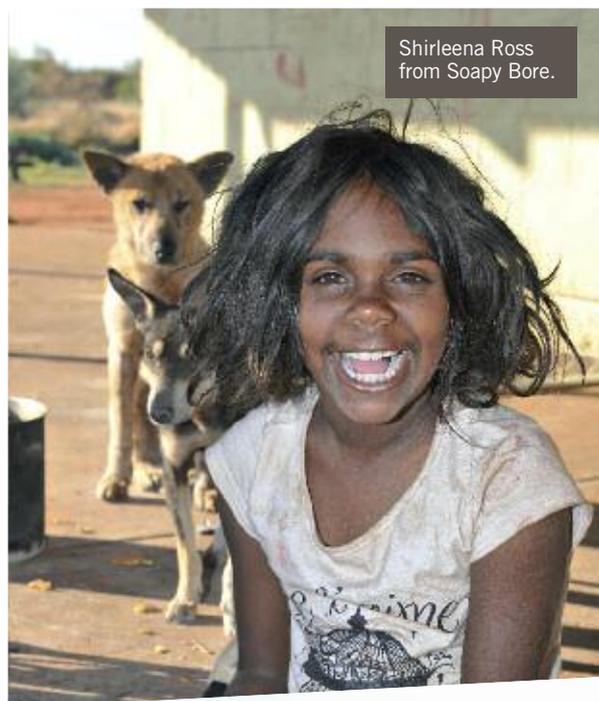


WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING NOW?

Despite the evidence that living on traditional homelands is beneficial, current government policies direct resources into larger centres, called 'growth towns'. Only a tiny fraction goes to homelands like Utopia.

Policy changes are starving Aboriginal communities of essential services and effectively forcing families into larger cities and towns.

Amnesty International is demanding that the government stop punishing Aboriginal Peoples for choosing to live on their traditional lands. By cutting vital services, the government is effectively abandoning homelands.



Shirleena Ross
from Soapy Bore.

DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Last term we told you about the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In 2009, the Australian Government made a statement of support for the declaration. Amnesty International's homelands campaign aims to hold the government to account for upholding this declaration.

CORE RIGHTS IN THE DECLARATION INCLUDE:

Article 21

1. Indigenous Peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions.

Article 25

Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26

1. Indigenous Peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous Peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.



This is a special place, I don't want to go no other place, it's where I'm gonna stay forever, it's all family sitting down here. This is one country, one family.

Alyawarr elder,
Motorbike Paddy Ngal



(Left to right) Isaiha Kngwarrey, Tristan Kemarr, Joseline Kemarr, Jermone Kemarr and Leevina Kngwarrey on a day trip on their country near Mosquito Bore, during the school holidays.

ACT NOW>>**FILL OUT THE CIRCLE BELOW**

Show the people of the Utopia homelands that you support the homelands by filling out the circle below. You can include a personal message for the people of Utopia.

Cut it out and post it back to us, and we will send your message on to the Alyawarr and Anmatyerr Peoples of the Utopia homelands to show your support.

Cut it out and post it back to:

Youth Coordinator

Amnesty International, Locked Bag 23 Broadway NSW 2007

Remember to let us know that we have permission to use your circle in our campaigning work.

If you'd like us to send you pictures of your action being delivered to the Alyawarr and Anmatyerr Peoples, fill in the extra details below the circle and send that back too.



Hi, I am

**and I stand with Alyawarr and Anmatyerr Peoples
in asking the government not to abandon homelands.**

Signature

Full Name

Email: _____

School: _____

School postcode: _____ **Date of birth:** ____ / ____ / ____

Countries in crisis

2011 has been a turbulent year for the people of the Middle East and North Africa (see term two's school action pack for a map of this region). Thousands have protested against their governments in a bid to provoke the change so desperately needed.

Protests started in Tunisia on 18 December 2010 and sparked similar uprisings throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Many countries in the region have been governed under strict regimes headed by tyrants for decades, but people now want democracy. Passionate young people have played a vital role in the protests so far, with many protest groups being organised using social media like Twitter and Facebook.

The next few months are critical to the success of the uprisings. As change sweeps across the Middle East and North Africa, Amnesty International is committed to helping human rights reforms take hold in the region.



Amnesty international responds immediately to human rights crises as they occur and works tirelessly to prevent situations reaching crisis point. Our special crisis response team monitors potential human rights crises around the world and ensures that people are informed, engaged and ready to act swiftly when they occur.



EGYPT UNDER CLOSE WATCH

The widely-publicised Egypt uprising started on 25 January. As the uprisings escalated, Amnesty International activists stood in solidarity with the people of Egypt and worked to ensure that human rights were protected during the protests and in any new regime that developed. Two staff members from Amnesty International were arrested during the action but later released after international pressure.

In Australia, Amnesty International held crisis response rallies in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney to show solidarity with the people of Egypt.

On 11 February 2011 Hosni Mubarak stepped down as the Egyptian President to much rejoicing from the Egyptian people. Hosni Mubarak went on trial on 3 August 2011 facing charges including corruption and unlawful killing of pro-democracy protestors.



The 'Arab Spring' is the name coined for the revolutions and protests that have been sweeping the Middle East and North Africa since December 2010.

ESCALATING CRISIS IN SYRIA

Syrian people continue to protest against the regime of President Bashar al-Assad. Crackdowns on protestors so far have been violent, and our crisis response escalated following the Syrian government's tank assault on residential areas in the city of Hama, the fourth-largest city in Syria. Despite this violence, the people of Hama have continued to take action. In Syria's capital Damascus, more than half a million people took to the streets in protest on 1 July 2011.

At the time of writing, Amnesty International has collated the names of 1700 people who have already been killed. Amnesty International has also launched a campaign to demand the UN Security Council take binding action to stop these crimes against humanity.



A flashmob in Berlin show solidarity for the people of Syria. © AI



A girl waves a flag during demonstration, Cairo, Egypt, 4 February 2011. © Demotix/Adham Oma



The 2011 Egypt protests. © AI



ACT NOW>>**TASTE OF FREEDOM**

Show the people of Syria that they have the support of school students by making a paper flower, in memory of the Syrians who have died. Lay them all together, take a photo and email to youth@amnesty.org.au You can also send us your flower so we can take a photo of it.

Send them to:

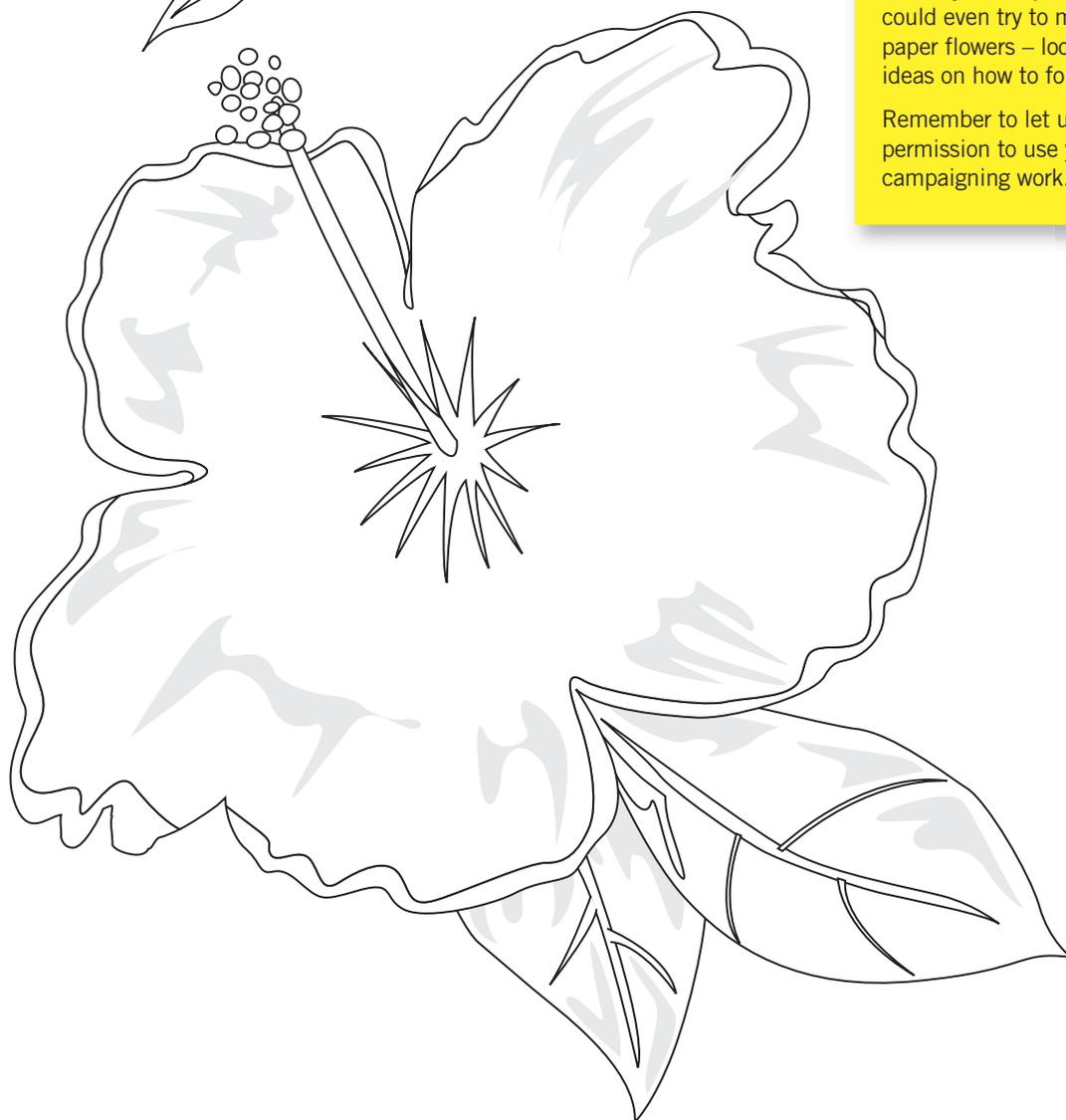
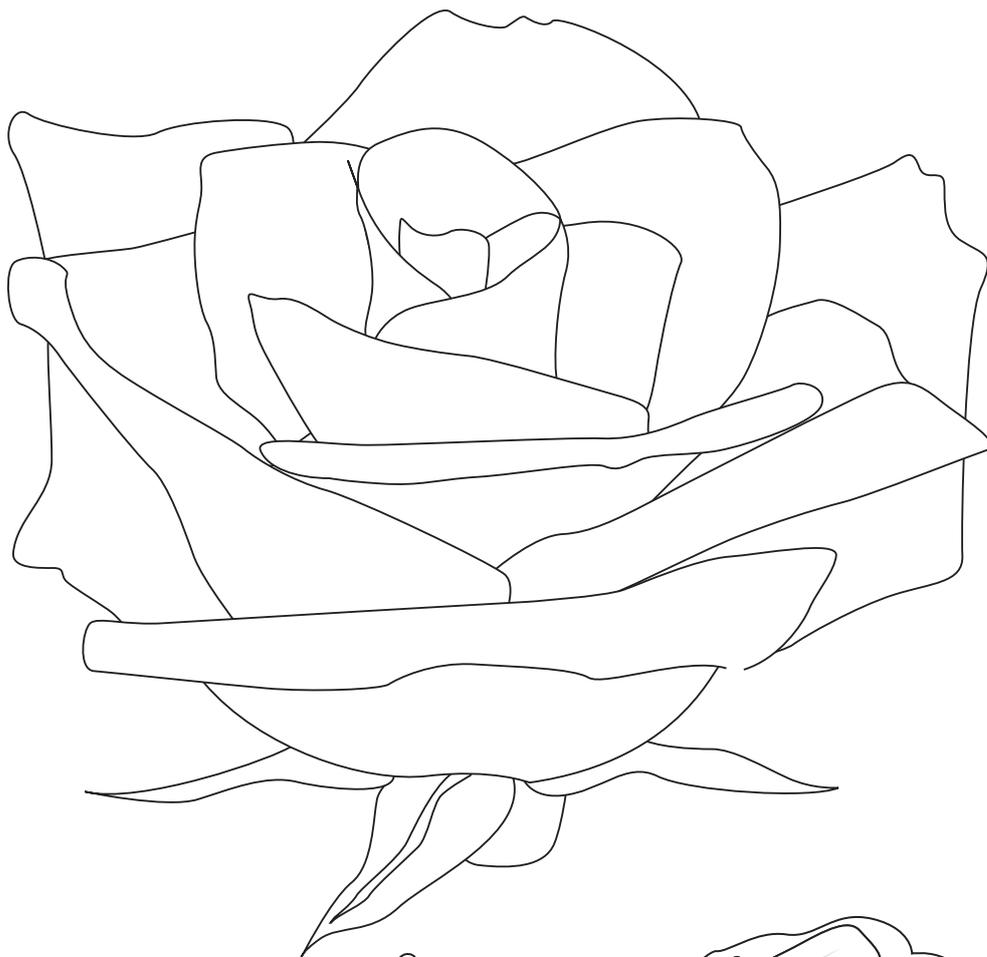
Youth Coordinator
Amnesty International
Locked Bag 23 Broadway NSW 2007

We will then send them to the UN Security Council members to show that Australia's school students care about the people of Syria.

Instructions: Photocopy and cut out the flower stencils below. Colour them and sticky-tape them to a wooden skewer or pipecleaner to make a flower

Be even more creative and make your own flower stencils. You could use brightly coloured paper or patterned paper, and make them as big as you like. If you're up for a challenge, you could even try to make some origami paper flowers – look on the internet for ideas on how to fold them.

Remember to let us know that we have permission to use your artwork in our campaigning work.



Shine a light on our 50th anniversary celebrations!

On 28 May 2011 Amnesty International celebrated its 50th anniversary. Fifty years ago, Peter Benenson wrote an article in a London newspaper after he read about two students in Portugal imprisoned for drinking a toast to liberty.

His article shined a light on prisoners of conscience across the globe, and sparked something huge – today, Amnesty International is a movement of more than 3 million people working together to achieve human rights.

Throughout this year we have encouraged students to celebrate our anniversary. This term you can celebrate by following in Peter Benenson's footsteps and writing letters on behalf of prisoners of conscience.

SHINE A LIGHT

Amnesty International's Shine a Light event in December raises awareness for people at risk of human rights abuse. We aim to shine a light on the stories of the individuals and make sure they are not forgotten.

Amnesty International held similar letter writing events in 2010 and there were 630,000 actions taken in over 50 countries!

Letter writing events have achieved some amazing results:

- On 10 December 2010, Gambian politician Femi Peters was released early from prison after featuring in a Shine a Light letter writing campaign.
- Chinese political activist Mao Hengfeng was allowed to meet with her family in January 2011 – the first time since her July 2010 court appearance.
- Mexican authorities provided two bodyguards to protect Father Alejandro Solalinde Guerra, who had been threatened after protecting refugees.

We have chosen three cases that we would like you to shine a light on. See the details inside.

50



I wanted a laptop for Christmas, but I got my father back – the biggest Christmas present ever. I want to thank Amnesty International from the bottom of my heart ... I'm very, very happy ... it's good to have my dad back.

Femi Peters Junior, son of Gambian political leader Femi Peters, who was imprisoned for organising a peaceful demonstration.

Hundreds of balloons were released to symbolise demands for justice and freedom at Amnesty International's 50th anniversary celebrations, Helsinki, 28 May 2011.



We have chosen three cases that we would like you to shine a light on. Please send all your letters back to Amnesty International so we can include you in the global tally. We will then send your letters to Indonesia, Bahrain and North Korea.

INDONESIA: JOHAN TETERISSA

Indonesian teacher Johan Teterissa is serving a 15-year prison sentence for leading a peaceful public protest in front of Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

During a ceremony for National Family Day in Ambon, the capital city of Maluku province, protestors walked onto a field and performed a traditional war dance in front of the President. The protestors, who were mainly teachers and farmers, then raised the Benang Raja flag – a flag that's banned in Indonesia because it symbolises Maluku independence (Maluku is an island group that forms part of Indonesia). After the protestors' arrest, they were reportedly beaten by police and tortured. They were all sentenced to between seven and 20 years' imprisonment.



Johan Teterissa.
© Al Jazeera
English

ACT NOW >>

Write to the Minister of Justice and Human Rights in Indonesia, urging him to:

- Release Johan Teterissa immediately and unconditionally.
- Ensure that Johan Teterissa is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated while in detention and that he has access to medical treatment if he requires it, lawyers of his choosing, and visits from family members.
- Ensure that prison conditions and the treatment of prisoners meet standards provided for in Indonesian law as well as UN Standard Minimum Rules on the Treatment of Prisoners.

Address your letters to:

Patrialis Akbar
Minister of Justice and Human Rights
(Salutation: Dear Minister)

NORTH KOREA: YODOK PRISON CAMP

For decades, North Korean authorities have denied the existence of mass political prison camps. Yet Amnesty International now has satellite photography and testimonies from former prisoners that confirm their existence. The pictures also show that they are growing in size.

Amnesty International estimates that there are up to 50,000 prisoners in Yodok, which is just one of six camps we know about. Thousands of people – including children – have been sent to the camp just because their parents or other family members were sent to the camp.

Many prisoners in Yodok do not even know what they are accused of. They are forced to work in appalling conditions and to witness public executions, and are frequently subjected to torture.



Satellite image of Political Prison Camp 15, North Korea (Yodok).
© 2011
DigitalGlobe, Inc



Amnesty International believes that camps such as Yodok are unjustifiable and inhumane.

Send your letters to:

Shine a Light
Amnesty International
Locked Bag 23 Broadway NSW 2007

**ACT NOW>>**

Write to Chairman Kim Jong-Il and ask him to acknowledge the camps' existence and close them immediately:

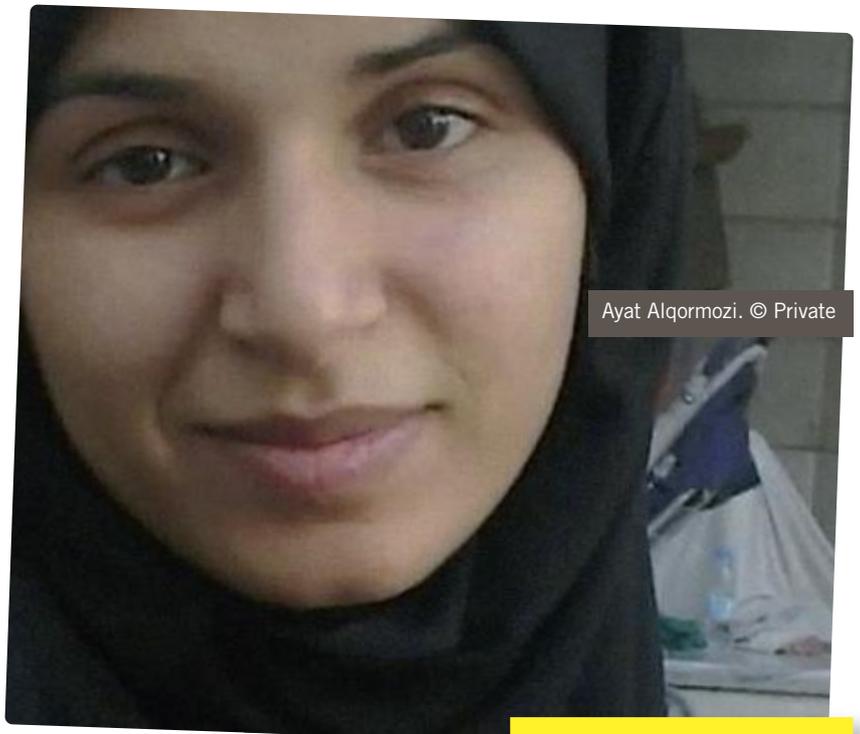
Address your letters to:

Kim Jong-Il,
Chairman of the National Defence Committee
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
(Salutation: Dear Chairman)

**BAHRAIN:
AYAT ALQORMOZI**

20-year-old Bahraini university student and poet Ayat Alqormozi could be sent to prison at any time, simply because she recited a poem criticising the King of Bahrain at a pro-reform rally. She read the poem aloud in February 2011 in Manama, Bahrain's capital. She has also recited another poem at the Pearl Roundabout, this time criticising the Prime Minister of Bahrain.

Ayat Alqormozi turned herself in to the authorities after masked members of the security forces twice raided her parents' house and threatened to kill her brothers if she did not surrender. Since then she has been sentenced to one year in prison. She has already spent between March and July 2011 in detention, during which time she was tortured.



Ayat Alqormozi. © Private

ACT NOW>>

Write to the King of Bahrain, urging him to:

- Annul her conviction and drop any pending charges against her.
- Remove any conditions and limitations that have been attached to her current release.
- Make public the results of the investigation into her allegations of torture or other ill-treatment and to bring to justice anyone responsible for such acts.
- Respect and uphold the rights to freedom of expression, movement and assembly in Bahrain, including the right to peaceful protest.

Write to:

His Majesty Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa
King of Bahrain
(Salutation: Your Majesty)

Poster competition update!

Last term we told you about our exciting poster competition to help celebrate 50 years of defending human rights. This competition is due to kick off in 2012 – stay tuned for ways to get involved!

Some of these posters are below. For more ideas and to see more posters go to www.amnesty.org/50

