

Thousands of Amnesty International supporters and activists from over 50 countries wrote and signed more than 636,000 appeals and messages of support during the annual letter writing marathon in December 2010. This is what happened next.

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# How we wrote for rights and made a difference

LETTER WRITING MARATHON 2010



## Mao Hengfeng has finally seen her family

Shortly after thousands of appeals were sent to the Chinese authorities, human rights defender Mao Hengfeng was allowed to meet with her family for the first time in over a year. She is serving an 18-month sentence at a Re-education Through Labour facility in Beijing. Her husband believes the international pressure led to the visit.



## Father Alejandro Solalinde Guerra now has police protection

Father Solalinde has been provided with two bodyguards to protect him against the harassment and threats he has received for his work defending migrants in Mexico. Staff at the shelter he runs have created a huge banner from all the cards and letters sent to them, and say they appreciate the solidarity.



## Femi Peters is free and back at home

Gambian opposition politician Femi Peters was released early from prison in December 2010. His son told Amnesty International: "I wanted a laptop for Christmas, but I got my father back – the biggest Christmas present ever."



## Zeliman Murdalov's family is closer to knowing his whereabouts

Zelimkhan Murdalov has not been seen since 2001, when he was detained in Chechnya. His sister said: "We are very happy that Amnesty International has done this campaigning for my brother Zelimkhan. We have appealed to so many officials without any result but the authorities cannot stay silent every time. They will have to respond."



## Walid Yunis Ahmed is no longer detained without charge

Walid Yunis Ahmad has finally been charged after a decade in detention in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. He said he appreciates the work of Amnesty International members, which helps to keep alive his hopes of one day being released and seeing his children again.

*“Thank you for your help... I'm deeply touched by the fact that people living far away from Senegal are concerned about my situation.”*

Khady Bassène



## Media focuses on threats to Norma Cruz

The Guatemalan media highlighted the threats against women's rights activist Norma Cruz. Norma said she would like to find a way to thank every single person who sent letters and postcards, which are now displayed on the office walls of the Survivors' Foundation (Fundación Sobrevivientes) in Guatemala City.



## Khady Bassène is “deeply touched” by the support

Khady Bassène is trying to find out what happened to her husband Jean Diandy after he was arrested in 1999. She sent the following message to those who wrote to her: "Thank you for your help... I'm deeply touched by the fact that people living far away from Senegal are concerned about my situation." She also found it comforting to know that people sent letters to the authorities.



## Roma community is flooded by letters of solidarity

The Roma families who were forcibly evicted from their homes in Romania were very pleased to receive letters of solidarity from activists and to hear about the appeals that have been sent to the Mayor on their behalf: "Thank you! We have received hundreds of letters already and there are even more waiting for us at the post office."

The annual Write for Rights marathon will be back later this year.

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