

The Philippines: Free Senator Leila de Lima and All Prisoners of Conscience

April 5, 2019

H.E. Jose Manuel G. Romualdez
Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines
1600 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ambassador:

I am deeply concerned by the continued detention of **Senator Leila de Lima**, arrested on February 24, 2017 on drug related charges. I strongly urge you to drop all charges against Senator de Lima and immediately and unconditionally release her.

The charges against Senator de Lima stem from her vocal criticism of President Duterte's 'war on drugs', which has resulted in the extrajudicial execution of thousands of suspected drug offenders. After the Senator opened a Senate inquiry into unlawful killings in the anti-drug campaign, the President and other officials unleashed a series of criminal accusations and offensive remarks against Senator de Lima, often based on her gender. Even before President Duterte took office in 2016, he and de Lima had clashed over Duterte's alleged involvement in human rights violations.

Amnesty International considers Senator Leila de Lima to be a prisoner of conscience and a human rights defender. As such, I am calling on you to drop all charges against Senator de Lima, and to release her immediately and unconditionally.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name:

Street Address:

City/Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Email Address:

Sri Lanka: Justice for Ragihar Manoharan and the Trinco Five

April 5, 2019

President Maithripala Sirisena
Presidential Secretariat
Colombo 1, Sri Lanka

Dear President Sirisena:

I am very concerned about the killings of Ragihar Manoharan and four other Sri Lankan Tamil students (“the Trinco Five”) on January 2, 2006 in Trincomalee. According to a witness, members of the Sri Lankan security forces shot the five innocent students dead when they had gathered near the seafront that evening for a chat.

An initial police investigation into the killings did not disclose who killed the students or lead to any prosecutions. The Sri Lankan government established an ad hoc commission of inquiry in September 2006 to examine this case and certain others. The commission’s final report was given to President Rajapaksa in 2009 but was not made public until October 2015. A police sub-inspector and 12 Special Task Force personnel were arrested in February 2006 in connection with the case but later released without any charges being brought. In July 2013, the same STF personnel were re-arrested and then released on bail on October 14, 2013. To date, after 13 years, no one has been held responsible for these murders.

The families of Ragihar Manoharan and the four other students deserve justice. Please ensure that those responsible for their deaths are finally held accountable in proceedings meeting international standards for fair trials.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name:

Street Address:

City/Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Email Address:

Syria: Free Ali Mahmoud Othman and All Prisoners of Conscience

April 5, 2019

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Bashar Ja'afari, Ph.D.
Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations
820 Second Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Your Excellency:

I am deeply concerned about **Ali Mahmoud Othman**, a citizen journalist from Homs, Syria.

Ali Mahmoud Othman disappeared in March 2012. No one has heard from him since Syrian state TV aired footage of him in May 2012 being questioned by TV presenter Rafiq Lutuf about his involvement in the protest movement in Homs and his media activities. The footage makes it clear that he had been arrested by government forces.

I find it deeply disturbing that his family remains without any information about his fate and whether he was charged with any offences and tried.

Ali Mahmoud Othman ran a makeshift media center in the besieged Baba Amr district of Homs. He was also well-known for helping foreign journalists enter Baba 'Amr neighborhood, and for facilitating the movement of foreign journalists in and out of Homs. He started reporting on the situation in Syria in the absence of reports by professional journalists, following the outbreak of the Syrian uprising in mid-March 2011.

I call on you and your government take the following actions to help address this situation:

- Release **Ali Mahmoud Othman** immediately and unconditionally if he is held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urgently inform Ali Mahmoud Othman's family immediately of their son's whereabouts, welfare and legal status;
- Ensure that he is protected from secret detention, torture and other ill-treatment, and allowed immediate contact with his family and a lawyer of his choice.

Thousands of Syrians have disappeared into Syrian custody since the start of the uprising in 2011, and other families similarly have no information of their relatives' health, whereabouts, or legal status. These disappearances are a source of grave concern to me, and I fear they reflect the critical situation of human rights in Syria. **Can I have confidence that you and your government will take immediate action on this?**

I thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Name:

Street Address:

City/Town, State:

Zip Code:

Email Address:

China: Immediately and Unconditionally Release Tashi Wangchuk and

All Prisoners of Conscience

April 5, 2019

Ambassador Cui Tiankai
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
3505 International Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Your Excellency:

I am writing to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Tashi Wangchuk, a prisoner of conscience. He is a Tibetan entrepreneur and language rights activist. He has been detained by the Chinese government since January 27, 2016 on charges of inciting separatism, after he worked to sue the Chinese government to expand access to Tibetan language education. He faces up to 15 years in prison if he is convicted.

Please do all you can to ensure:

- The immediate and unconditional release of Tashi Wangchuk
- Regular access for Tashi Wangchuk to his family, lawyer of his choosing, and any medical treatment he may require, pending his release
- That Tashi Wangchuk is protected from torture and ill-treatment

I thank you for your attention to these concerns and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Name:

Street Address:

City/Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Email Address:

China: Immediately and Unconditionally Release Ilham Tohti and

All Prisoners of Conscience

April 5, 2019

Ambassador Cui Tiankai
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
3505 International Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Your Excellency:

I am writing in regard to **Ilham Tohti**, an economics professor at Minzu University of China in Beijing, who was sentenced to life imprisonment on September 23, 2014 for "separatism." **Amnesty International believes him to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful expression of his beliefs.**

Ilham Tohti, who is being held in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region Prison Number 1 in Urumqi, maintains that he opposes violence and separatism and that he only highlighted concerns about social and political issues as a Uighur academic. His lawyers report that he has lost at least 16 kg due to a hunger strike because he was not provided with food compatible with his Islamic dietary requirements and because he has been denied food by prison staff. He has been shackled repeatedly and suffers from various pains in his abdominal area and appears to have a cataract. He has not been allowed a medical examination and was not receiving any treatment according to his lawyers. He has also reportedly been harassed and punched by other inmates.

Amnesty International is calling for Ilham Tohti's immediate and unconditional release as he appears to have been imprisoned solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression guaranteed in the Chinese Constitution. While he remains in prison, I urge you to ensure that Ilham Tohti is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment in prison. Additionally he should be allowed access to a medical examination and treatment and visits with his family. I also call on you to facilitate Ilham Tohti's move to a prison in Beijing so that he can be closer to his immediate family members there. Furthermore, I urge you to launch a full and impartial investigation into allegations that he has been tortured and to bring those responsible to justice.

I thank you for your attention to these concerns, and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Name:

Street Address:

City/Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Email Address:

Bahrain: Immediately and Unconditionally Release Nabeel Rajab and

All Prisoners of Conscience

April 5, 2019

Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa
Office of His Majesty the King
P.O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace, Manama, Bahrain

Your Majesty:

I am writing to express my concern with the sentencing of **Nabeel Rajab**, on February 21, 2018, to 5-years imprisonment for alleged posts made on his Twitter account.

Nabeel Rajab is an internationally recognized human rights activist and president of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights. In June of 2016, he was arrested and charged with "spreading false rumors in time of war" and "insulting public authorities". These charges stemmed from tweets made in March 2015 relating to the war in Yemen and to allegations of torture in Bahrain's Jaw Prison. I believe that these tweets should have been protected as freedom of expression.

I also believe that every country is made stronger by its citizens being allowed to voice their views without fear of reprisal. **Therefore, I respectfully urge you to release Nabeel Rajab immediately and unconditionally.**

I thank you for your attention to these concerns, and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Name:

Street Address:

City/Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Email Address: