



## AI Group 48 Portland, Oregon

June 2026 Newsletter

Next Meeting June 11th on Zoom



### **Urgent Action: China** **Grave Concerns for Life of Detained Journalist**

**Name and Pronoun: Zhang Zhan (She/her - Zhang is her surname, Zhan is her given name)**

Since being sentenced in September 2025 to another four years in prison, journalist Zhang Zhan's health has deteriorated to an alarming level. She suffers from serious gastric illness and has lost significant weight, becoming extremely weak. She has reportedly been on hunger strike against her arbitrary detention since January 2025. Her condition is life-threatening, and urgent intervention in her case is critical; yet, persistent refusal to provide her access to a lawyer of her choice has hampered efforts to document her situation and appeal her conviction. She must be released immediately and, pending her release, she must have access to adequate healthcare, provided in compliance with medical ethics.

Chinese journalist and activist Zhang Zhan was convicted of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” and sentenced to four years in jail following her trial on September 19th, 2025 at the Pudong New District People's Court.

Since being sentenced again in September 2025, Zhang Zhan's health has worsened dramatically. She is suffering from severe stomach problems, and has lost a significant amount of weight, leaving her extremely weak. Reports indicate that she has been on hunger strike since January 2025 to protest her detention. Also, the authorities have repeatedly denied her access to a lawyer of her choice, making it difficult to monitor her situation or properly pursue an appeal against her conviction.

Zhang Zhan was previously convicted of the same “crime” for reporting on the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic in Wuhan. A former lawyer, she travelled to Wuhan in February 2020 to provide on-the-ground information about what was happening there. She posted on social media about how government officials had detained independent reporters and harassed families of Covid-19 patients.

She went missing in Wuhan in May 2020. It later emerged that she had been taken by the Chinese authorities and detained in Shanghai, where



### **Urgent Action: Iran** **Protesters and Dissidents** **at Risk of Execution**

Since the U.S.-Israeli unlawful attacks on Iran began on February 28, 2026, Iranian authorities have arbitrarily executed at least 36 individuals after being convicted of politically motivated charges following grossly unfair trials. At least 78 protesters, dissidents, and others with real or perceived links to banned opposition groups are under sentence of death and at risk of execution. They include 41 people arrested in relation to the January 2026 protests. At least five of them were children at the time of the alleged offense. Fears of further executions are heightened as Iranian authorities continue to weaponize the death penalty to repress dissent and senior officials call for expedited proceedings and “harsh” penalties against those arrested since the war started.

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/iran-protesters-and-dissidents-at-risk-of-execution/>

she was convicted of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” after a sham trial.

Zhang Zhan was released on May 13th, 2024 after completing a four-year prison sentence.

Upon release, she was subjected to strict surveillance and continuous harassment by the authorities, and she was detained again less than four months later. Her second arrest (in September 2024) came shortly after she reportedly travelled to the northwestern province of Gansu to show solidarity with other human rights defenders.

Zhang Zhan has spent more than five and a half years deprived of her liberty, solely for exercising her right to freedom of expression. During her previous imprisonment, she went on a hunger strike that led to multiple hospitalizations and her weight dropped drastically to just 37 kilograms — half of what she weighed prior to her deprivation of liberty.

Zhang Zhan was featured in Amnesty International’s 2021 Write for Rights campaign.

Amnesty International has documented numerous cases of independent journalists and activists who were sentenced for reporting on the pandemic, with Zhang Zhan being a notable example. These repressive measures intensified after the 2022 “White Paper Movement” leading to further restrictions on civil society. More information on the misuse of national security and public order-related criminal provisions to target human rights activism, covering cases of 64 individuals over the last ten years, is available in our October 2025 report, [How could this verdict be ‘legal’?](#)

## Sample Letter

*Dear Vice Mayor Zhang,*

*I am writing to express my grave concern for journalist and human rights defender Zhang Zhan, whose health condition is cause for urgent alarm, while her human rights continue to be violated.*

*For many months now, there have been grave concerns for Zhang Zhan’s health and the adequacy of healthcare provided to her in custody. She is reported to be extremely weak, suffering from serious gastric illness, and to have become significantly thinner.*

*Zhang has also been on hunger strike against her arbitrary detention. As you may be aware, during her previous imprisonment, she went on a prolonged hunger strike that led to multiple hospitalizations, raising further concerns about the cumulative impact on her health.*

*Following her conviction in September 2025, it has been reported that her lawyers’ repeated requests to meet with her have been consistently refused, denying her meaningful access to legal counsel and the right to appeal. Her family and lawyer have also reportedly been subjected to harassment and intimidation by the authorities—another serious cause for concern.*

*May 14th, 2026 marks six years since Zhang Zhan’s first arrest, after which she served a four-year sentence following a sham trial – she was arrested again less than four months after her release and remains deprived of liberty to this day. This sombre anniversary underscores the iterative nature of the violations she has endured and the continued failure to remedy her situation.*

*I call on you to:*

- *Release Zhang Zhan immediately and unconditionally and ensure the convictions are quashed;*
- *Pending her release, ensure that Zhang Zhan has adequate access to qualified health professionals providing health care in compliance with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy, and informed consent;*
- *Ensure she can have access to her lawyers and family, and that she is not subject to torture or other ill-treatment;*
- *Stop harassing and threatening human rights defenders and those who support them, such as their families and lawyers.*

*Yours sincerely,*

### Take Action:

Write an appeal in your own words or use the sample letter.

#### **Vice Mayor Zhang Yahong**

Shanghai Municipal People’s Government  
No. 200 Renmin Avenue, Huangpu District  
Shanghai, 200003  
People’s Republic of China

Please take action as soon as possible until December 31st, 2026. Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

## **Urgent Action: Mexico Journalist Receives Death Threats**

On May 4, 2026, journalist Alberto Amaro received a threatening message through Facebook warning of an attempt on his life and the lives of his family members. This latest threat adds to a long pattern of intimidation, harassment, and violence he has faced since 2019, and that forced him to leave the country for a year in 2024, because of his journalistic work. We call on the authorities ensure his safety, a thorough investigation on the attacks and threats against him and his family, and demonstrate through concrete actions that freedom of expression and the defence of human rights will be protected.

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/mexico-journalist-receives-death-threats/>



## **Urgent Action: USA Shut Down Migrant Family Detention Center**

The South Texas Family Residential Center (“Dilley”) in Dilley, Texas, is the only migrant family detention facility in the United States, and it is emblematic of the cruelty of the US migration detention system. Families detained there have reported prolonged incarceration without due process, denial of medical care, and inadequate access to clean drinking water. Infants and children have experienced alarming weight loss, families are frequently separated while detained, and children are denied opportunities for joy and play. Dilley should be shut down immediately, and US authorities must end the detention of migrant children and families once and for all.

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/usa-shut-down-migrant-family-detention-center/>

## **Congress Must Put a Stop to Funding of International Law Violations in NDAA Markup**

June 2nd, 2026--In a letter Amnesty International USA sent to members of the House Armed Services Committee ahead of the Fiscal Year 2027 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) markup, the organization is urging lawmakers to block funding for operations that contribute to human rights abuses, violate international law and endanger civilians.

The NDAA plays a critical role in shaping U.S. defense policy and ensuring that the United States’ national security priorities align with its stated values, strategic interests, and global commitments. The letter raises detailed concerns over recent U.S. military operations in Venezuela and Iran that violate the U.N. charter, unlawful boat strikes in the Caribbean and Pacific, civilian casualties resulting from U.S. air strikes in Yemen and Iran, weakened civilian harm mitigation safeguards, the change of policy related to indiscriminate weapons including anti-personnel landmines, and the growing use of unlawful data collection and artificial intelligence in military targeting.

“It is undeniable that the Trump Administration has weakened safeguards meant to protect civilians and uphold international law,” said Amanda Klasing, National Director of Government Relations and Advocacy at Amnesty International USA. “From unlawful use of force to increased civilian deaths – including children — resulting from U.S. military operations, the consequences are devastating. Congress cannot continue writing blank checks for operations that put civilian lives at risk. The NDAA gives lawmakers a clear opportunity to draw a line against serious breaches of international law and unlawful military actions carried out directly by the U.S. or with U.S. support.”

The letter asks the House Armed Services Committee to demonstrate leadership and diligence to advance legislation that supports the human rights of people in the United States and abroad, strengthens civilian protection, and upholds accountability. Amnesty International is also asking for the Committee to ensure no funding is approved that would contribute to further violations.

“This should not be controversial,” said Klasing. “Congress should use this year’s NDAA to strengthen oversight, protect civilians, and ensure U.S. taxpayer dollars are not fueling unlawful attacks, civilian harm or human rights abuses. If lawmakers fail to act, they are choosing to normalize these violations.”

## Egypt: Drop Charges Against Activists Arrested for Demanding Release of Unjustly Jailed Prisoners

Press Release June 4th, 2026 --The Egyptian authorities must immediately halt the unjust prosecutions of three human rights activists arrested solely for organizing a peaceful event calling for the release of those arbitrarily detained, Amnesty International said today.

On May 25, Egyptian police arrested pharmacist Hanan Altantawy, and lawyers Mohamed Abu al-Dayyar and Wafaa al-Masry, all members of the informal group the Committee to Defend Prisoners of Conscience (CDPC), for the group's involvement in organizing a public event in Cairo two weeks earlier highlighting cases of people unjustly detained for political reasons. Altantawy and al-Masry were released on bail on the day of their arrest but prosecutors ordered that Abu al-Dayyar be held in pretrial detention for 15 days. All three face criminal investigations in connection with accusations of "disseminating false news", with Abu al-Sayyar is additionally facing terrorism-related charges.

"By pursuing these unjust prosecutions, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's government is sending a clear message that it has no intention of changing course or addressing the country's decade-long arbitrary detention crisis. It is rank hypocrisy for the authorities to claim progress on human rights to international partners such as the EU while arresting people for peacefully advocating justice and freedom for unjustly imprisoned activists, journalists and politicians," said Mahmoud Shalaby, Regional Researcher at Amnesty International.

"Instead of arresting peaceful activists, the Egyptian authorities must end their relentless crackdown on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and end the rampant use of arbitrary detention to intimidate activists that has devastated thousands of lives. The authorities must immediately and unconditionally

release Mohamed Abu al-Dayyar and drop all charges against Hanan Altantawy and Wafaa al-Masry."

On May 12, the CDPC organized a public exhibition titled 'They don't belong in prison' at the Cairo headquarters of the political party Bread and Freedom, highlighting the cases of several arbitrarily detained individuals, including Ashraf Omar opens in a new tab, Marwa Arafa opens in a new tab, Mohamed Adel opens in a new tab, and Yehia Hussein Abdelhady opens in a new tab.

On May 25, at around 1am, police went to the home of Abu al-Dayyar, the former campaign manager of presidential candidate Ahmed Altantawy, and arrested him. Egypt's Supreme State Security Prosecution (SSSP) prosecutors opened investigations against him on accusations of "joining a terrorist group," "disseminating false news," and "using a website to promote terrorist activities." They questioned him about the work of the CDPC, its exhibition and venue, as well as his reasons for working on Altantawy's electoral campaign, according to his lawyer from the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR).

The police presented as evidence of the accusations above a screenshot of a Facebook post about prisoners of conscience and a CD containing material related to photographs displayed at the exhibition.

This is not the first time the Egyptian authorities have targeted Abu al-Dayyar. In February 2024, a court sentenced him to a year in prison on charges of conspiring and inciting others to "disseminate election-related material without authorization." These charges stemmed opens in a new tab from calls made by Ahmed Altantawy's electoral election campaign urging people to complete endorsement forms online, after his supporters faced obstacles and intimidation when they attempted to register endorsements at pub-



lic notary offices.

A few hours after Abu al-Dayyar's arrest, on May 25, police arrested Wafaa al-Masry from where she was staying while she was on holiday in Egypt's North Coast. SSSP prosecutors investigated her on charges of "disseminating false news," according to her lawyer, human rights defender Mahienour El-Massry. They questioned her about her role in organizing the exhibition and the criteria the CDPC uses to select cases for its campaigns, among other issues. On the same day, prosecutors ordered her release pending investigations on bail of 50,000 EGP (USD 957).

Also, on the morning of May 25, police raided Hanan Altantawy's home in Giza and arrested her, according to human rights lawyer Nabeh Elganadi. SSSP prosecutors investigated her on charges of "disseminating false news" and questioned her about the work of CDPC and the exhibition. On the same day, prosecutors ordered her release pending further investigations, on bail of 50,000 EGP (USD 957).

On May 17, the CDPC issued a statement opens in a new tab denouncing the arrest and intimidation of families of people held for political reasons in connection with the exhibition organized by the CDPC. Amnesty International learned that the authorities arrested several relatives of detainees in connection to the exhibition, before releasing them within days.

The CDPC is an informal group of members of political parties, activists, and other public figures who came together in November 2025 to campaign for the release of all those unjustly imprisoned through legal, media, and political advocacy.

Thousands of people continue to languish in arbitrary detention in Egypt solely for exercising their human rights, without legal basis or following grossly unfair trials. In November 2025, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) stated with

concern that the proliferation of arbitrary detention cases in Egypt indicates that the practice is systematic or widespread in the country.

## **Haiti: New Judicial Units Must Ensure Real Justice for Victims, Especially Children**

June 5th Press Release -- In response to the announcement by Haitian authorities of two new specialized judicial units intended to address, among other issues, serious human rights abuses in Haiti, Ana Piquer, Americas director at Amnesty International, said:

"The opening of these specialized judicial units is a necessary step in the fight against the widespread impunity that has enabled serious abuses against thousands of victims in Haiti, including sexual violence and the recruitment and use of children by gangs for criminal purposes."

Amnesty International expressly called on the Haitian state to prioritize the creation of specialized judicial chambers to investigate and prosecute grave human rights violations in a report on abuses against children in the context of gang violence in Haiti. The authorities must now ensure that these units are independent, have sufficient resources, and are staffed by personnel trained in human rights-based, trauma-informed and child-sensitive procedures.

The Haitian authorities must also ensure effective protection measures for judges, prosecutors and other judicial personnel, so that they can carry out their duties without threats, reprisals or undue interference.

The international community must provide technical and financial support to Haiti so that these units can operate effectively, independently and sustainably.

### **Group Coordinators**

Marty Fromer and Terrie Rodello

Newsletter -- Daniel Webb

OR Area Coordinator -- Marty Fromer

Indonesia actions -- Max White

China / Uyghur actions -- Marty Fromer

Central Africa/ Oregon State Death

Penalty Abolition-- Terrie Rodello

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