



AI Group 48 Portland, Oregon

August 2026 Newsletter

Next Meeting August 13th on Zoom



AIUSA Action Reporting Form

Thank you to everyone who has already used our new [Action Reporting Form for Amnesty Groups and Activists](#) to share their local group activism!

Through this survey tool, we hope to give groups an opportunity to share the work that they are doing in their own words and throughout the year, have a better sense of local group activism in real time, instead of just once a year, and shorten and simplify the Census going forward.

The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete for each action you are reporting. You can report actions whenever you would like, throughout the year. You can report as many or as few actions as you like.

If you do choose to use this form, please share as much as you can, so we have a full picture of all of the great activism happening across the country.

Urgent Action: China Prominent Kazakh Writer Held in Secret Detention

NAME AND PRONOUN: Zhengis Reskhan / (he/him)

Zhengis Reskhan, a prominent Kazakh writer from China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, has been detained since March 19th, 2026 following months of repeated police interrogations. Since he was taken away, his family has received no official notification of his detention, legal status or the reasons for his detention, and has had no contact with him. According to his son, the authorities have verbally accused him of "promoting extremist thought" and "holding extremist thoughts" but have provided no formal charges or legal documents. His family, both in China and abroad, has also reportedly been subjected to surveillance and intimidation. Unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that Zhengis Reskhan has committed an internationally recognized criminal offence, he should be immediately released.

Zhengis Reskhan, born on June 18th, 1968, is a prominent ethnic Kazakh writer from Barkol Kazakh Autonomous County in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. One of the most ethnically diverse regions in China, an estimated half of the region's population belongs to predominantly Muslim ethnic groups, including Uyghurs and Kazakhs.

A member of the China Writers Association and the Xinjiang Writers Association, Zhengis Reskhan previously served as Chair of the Hami Regional Writers Association. He has published 13 literary works, primarily children's literature and humour, several of which have been officially translated from Kazakh into Chinese.

Zhengis Reskhan's passport had reportedly been confiscated by the authorities for approximately a decade before his detention. He was also reportedly subjected to further restrictions on his movement and his online activities.

Beginning on December 28th, 2025, Zhengis Reskhan was repeatedly summoned by police for questioning and detained for periods ranging from one day to one week before being released. On March 19th, 2026, he was taken away again. Since then, according to his son, the family has received no official notification of his detention or legal status and no legal documentation whatsoever. The family has received unofficial information indicating that he is being held in Hami Prison in the Uyghur Region, but the authorities have never officially confirmed his place of detention. The authorities' continued failure to officially acknowledge his place of detention or legal status raises serious concerns that his detention may amount to an enforced disappearance under international human rights law.

According to his son, relatives remaining in China have been subjected to surveillance and intimidation since Zhengis Reskhan's detention. He also reports receiving threatening communications urging him to stop speaking publicly about the case and withdraw his efforts to seek information about his father.

Amnesty International has documented widespread and systematic human rights violations against Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other predomi-

Graphics used are either in the public domain or from Amnesty International

nantly Muslim ethnic groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. In its 2021 report [*Like We Were Enemies in a War*](#), Amnesty International concluded that the Chinese authorities have subjected an estimated one million people to arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, political indoctrination and persecution on the basis of ethnicity and religion.

On August 31st, 2022, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights concluded that serious human rights violations had been committed in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in the context of the government's counter-terrorism and "de-extremification" policies, and that these violations may constitute crimes against humanity.

On July 1st, 2026, China's Ethnic Unity Law entered into force. The law requires state institutions to promote "ethnic unity" and a shared Chinese national identity and further institutionalizes long-standing assimilation policies. The law provides an additional legal framework for restricting the cultural, linguistic and religious rights of ethnic minorities, including Uyghurs, Kazakhs and Tibetans. Its broad and vaguely defined provisions may facilitate further restrictions on the peaceful exercise of human rights by members of non-Han ethnic communities both at home and abroad.

Sample Letter

Dear Minister Wang,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the detention of Zhengis Reskhan, a prominent Kazakh writer from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Uyghur region). I find it distressing that, since taking him into custody on March 19th, 2026 following months of repeated interrogations, the authorities have not officially disclosed his legal status or provided his family with any written notification concerning his detention.

According to information received by Amnesty International, Zhengis Reskhan was repeatedly summoned by police for questioning from late December 2025. The authorities have reportedly verbally alleged that he "promoted extremist thought" and "held extremist thoughts", yet no formal charges have been communicated or legal basis for his detention disclosed.

The authorities' failure to officially disclose Zhengis Reskhan's legal status or place of detention raises serious concerns that he is being held in secret and prolonged incommunicado detention, placing him

at heightened risk of torture and other ill-treatment. Further concerns have been raised that he may be subjected to enforced disappearance. As Zhengis Reskhan has a history of high blood pressure and mental health conditions, grave concerns for his health and well-being are compounded.

I am also alarmed by reports that his family members in China and abroad have been subjected to surveillance and intimidation for seeking information about his case. It is unacceptable for family members to be threatened if they publicly voice their concerns about their loved ones.

I urge you to:

- Unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that he has committed an internationally recognized criminal offence, release him immediately and unconditionally.*

- Pending his release, ensure that he has prompt and regular access to a lawyer of his own choosing, his family, and any medical care he may require, and that he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment.*

- End all intimidation, surveillance and reprisals against Zhengis Reskhan's family members, wherever they may reside, for seeking information about his case or peacefully exercising their human rights.*

Yours sincerely,

TAKE ACTION:

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

Minister Wang Xiaohong

Ministry of Public Security

14 Dongchangan Avenue

Dongcheng District, Beijing, 100741

People's Republic of China

Salutation: Dear Minister Wang,

Please take action as soon as possible until November 30th, 2026

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

45 International Organizations Join Amnesty International to Urge Gavin Newsom to Commute Death Sentences Before He Leaves Office

July 30, 2026--A coalition of 46 international organizations from around the world today issued an open letter to California Governor Gavin Newsom, urging him to take action to commute all death sentences in the state, a move they say would significantly change the face of the death penalty in the U.S., as well as create new global momentum toward abolition.

The organizations, representing members of the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty from across the world, called on the governor to use his remaining months in office to permanently remove the threat of execution for the more than 550 people currently under sentence of death in California.

The letter praised Governor Newsom's longstanding opposition to capital punishment, as also shown through his 2019 establishment of a moratorium on executions in California and urged him to take meaningful action in what it described as an "unmissable opportunity to leave an enduring mark on the death penalty." California holds more than 25% of the people sentenced to death in the

United States.

"Governor Newsom has already demonstrated leadership by establishing a moratorium on executions in California," said Nadia Daar, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA, who met with the governor's office earlier in the week. "Commuting all death sentences is the right thing to do, and its impact would not just be for those hundreds of individuals living with the constant threat of this inhuman punishment – it would be a bold move towards ending the death penalty more broadly. In his last months in office, Governor Newsom could transform California from a state with the nation's largest death row into a leader in the movement to end this despicable practice."

Governor Newsom has the power to directly grant clemency for about 40 percent of those with death sentences in California. He can ask the state Supreme Court to recommend commuting the death sentences for others. Amnesty International is asking Governor Newsom to act before he leaves office in January 2027.



USA: New Mexico Meta Ruling an Important Step Towards Safer Social Media for Children

August 7th, 2026--Responding to a New Mexico judge's ruling that Meta's platform design harmed children, Amnesty International USA's Deputy Director of Research, Justin Mazzola, said:

"This verdict is an important step towards creating safer social media for children and young people. For years, Amnesty International has warned opens in a new tab that major social media platforms have been designed to maximize engagement and profit, while failing to adequately protect children's rights.

"Crucially, the court went beyond imposing a financial penalty. By ordering changes to platform features, including removing "like" counts for people under 18 and restricting overnight notifications, the ruling recognizes that the harms children experience online are often the result of deliberate design choices.

"Amnesty has been calling for exactly this kind of action opens in a new tab. Child safety must be built

into platforms from the start, not added as an afterthought once harms are identified. This decision sends a clear message that social media companies cannot continue to prioritize engagement at the expense of children's wellbeing and rights."

New Mexico Judge Bryan Biedscheid on Thursday ordered Meta to pay \$567 million to address harms caused to children's mental health. Meta was also ordered to make changes to both the Instagram and Facebook platforms to make them safer for young users.

The ruling is in addition to a \$375 million fine Meta was ordered to pay in the same case in March, when a jury found it had misled users about the safety of its platforms and enabled sexual exploitation of young people.

Meta has stated that they disagree with the ruling and will appeal the decision.

Urgent Action Nicaragua: Disappeared After Seeking Indigenous Leader's Remains

On May 31, six relatives of the Indigenous Miskitu Leader, Brooklyn Rivera, had disappeared in Managua after traveling to claim his remains following the government's confirmation of his death. By June, relatives of the disappeared referred all efforts to find them had been unsuccessful and had not received any official information regarding their fate, whereabouts, or legal status. We call on the Nicaraguan authorities to immediately disclose their whereabouts and ensure their immediate release.

Brooklyn Rivera was a Miskitu Indigenous leader, former member of Nicaragua's National Assembly, and prisoner of conscience who was arbitrarily detained in September 2023. For much of his detention, authorities failed to disclose his whereabouts and denied him regular access to his family and trusted legal counsel. On May 28, 2026, Nicaraguan authorities released images and information indicating that he was hospitalized in critical condition, suffering from severe health complications after more than two years in detention. On May 31, 2026, authorities announced his death while in state custody.

Following Brooklyn Rivera's announcement of death in state custody, six people have been disappeared in Nicaragua after seeking information about his remains. Their whereabouts are to this date unknown, and authorities have failed to provide information to their relatives regarding their fate, legal status, or place of detention. Six relatives of Brooklyn Rivera were reportedly disappeared in Managua on May 31: Jorge Webster Rojas, Alda López Bryan, Jourbes Escobar López, Korny Valle Bushey, Florencia Sarmiento Alejandro, and Glenis Criesa Pantin Coleman.

The disappearance of these six individuals occurred in the context of increasing repression in Nicaragua, where Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have documented arbitrary detention, incommunicado detention, persecution of government critics, and attacks against Indigenous leaders and defenders, among other human rights violations.

Under international human rights law, enforced disappearance places individuals outside the protection of the law and exposes them to heightened risks of torture, other ill-treatment, and unlawful death. Authorities must immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of the six disappeared individuals, provide proof of life, ensure access to their families and lawyers, and release them immediately.

Sample Letter

Dear Minister María Amelia Coronel Kinloch,
I am concerned about the enforced disappearance of six relatives and members of the community of Indigenous Miskitu leader, Brooklyn Rivera.

Following the announcement of Rivera's death while in state custody, his relatives traveled to Managua to seek information about his remains and to recover them so they could lay him to rest in accordance with Miskito traditions. Shortly afterwards, Jorge Webster Rojas, Alda López Bryan, Jourbes Escobar López, Korny Valle Bushey, Florencia Sarmiento Alejandro, and Glenis Criesa Pantin Coleman reportedly disappeared. Since then, their relatives have been unable to obtain information about their whereabouts, legal status, or physical condition.

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

Postage Rates:

Within the United States

\$0.82 - Domestic Letter up to 1oz,
standard envelope size

\$0.65 - Domestic Postcard

International Postage

\$1.75 - Up to 1 oz





The authorities' failure to disclose their fate and whereabouts places them at grave risk of torture, other ill-treatment, and other serious human rights violations. Their families continue to endure profound anguish as they search for answers.

I urge you to immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of the six people, provide proof of their life, guarantee their safety, and ensure their immediate release.

Yours sincerely,

TAKE ACTION:

Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.

Click [here](#) to report your action(s) on UA 77.26. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Minister of the Interior
María Amelia Coronel Kinloch
4PVJ + M99 Calle Colón
Edificio Silvio Mayorga Delgado
Managua, Nicaragua
Email: correspondencia@migob.gob.ni
X: @MinRexNicaragua

Send a copy of your letter to the address below:
Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the UN
Permanent Nicaraguan Representative to the UN
820 Second Avenue, 8th Floor,
New York, N.Y. 10017
Email: nicaragua@un.int

Please take action as soon as possible until
October 20, 2026

Spain: Ensure Human Rights, Dignity and Humanity Are Central in Response to Exceptional Arrival of People in Ceuta

July 31st, 2026--Reacting to the crossing of tens of thousands of people, including children, from Morocco to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta and the reported deaths of 43 people, Esteban Beltrán, Director of Amnesty International Spain, said: "We are monitoring this situation very closely. Spanish and Moroccan authorities must put their human rights obligations at the center of their response to the situation. They must ensure access to the asylum system for those who request it and uphold the human rights of all migrants, irrespective of their mode of arrival, without discrimination.

"The large number of people arriving in Ceuta and the circumstances of crossings must not distract from the fact that under international law, the principle of non-refoulement is absolute and collective expulsions are prohibited in all cases.

"All forces deployed must act in accordance with international law and standards, including with regards to the use of force. Spanish authorities must also ensure that adequate healthcare and social care resources are deployed to respond to the needs of the people, including to cater for the needs of children and others at increased risk of human rights violations.

"Amnesty International calls on Spanish authorities to take necessary steps to prevent discriminatory impacts in their response to the situation, particularly on racialized people and children, and condemn the spread of racist rhetoric."

Ceuta authorities stated that over 60,000 people are estimated to have crossed. Spain has deployed army units in Ceuta to support the police and the Guardia Civil.

Nicaragua: Constitutional Reform Seeks to Dismantle the Right to Participate in Public Affairs

JULY 30, 2026 - In response to the constitutional reform initiative put forward by the Nicaraguan authorities to extend the presidential term and permanently exclude from electoral processes people labeled by the government as “traitors” or “coup plotters”, Amnesty International warns that these measures represent a further step in dismantling the right of Nicaraguans to participate in the public affairs of their country.

The right of all people to take part in the conduct of public affairs, including the right to vote and to be elected in genuine elections without unreasonable restrictions, is recognized under Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Nicaragua remains bound by this treaty and cannot arbitrarily eliminate or restrict these rights.

“This electoral reform is an attempt to consolidate a system in which the state arbitrarily decides who may exercise a fundamental human right and who is excluded from doing so on political grounds,” said Ana Piquer, Americas Director at Amnesty International.

The reform was presented following statements made by Co-President Daniel Ortega during a commemorative event on July 19, when he declared that “there will be no more elections here”, marking the beginning of a process to incorporate these restrictions into the country’s legal framework.

These measures form part of a sustained process of concentration of power and closure of civic space that intensified following the repression of the 2018 protests, during which, according to civil society organizations and regional and international human rights mechanisms, more than 300 people were killed. Since then, the authorities have cancelled the legal status of more than 5,000 civil society organizations, shut down independent media outlets and arbitrarily stripped people considered to be political opponents, journalists and human rights defenders of their nationality, leaving many stateless and forcing many others into exile.

Far from reversing this deterioration, the authorities have continued dismantling the rule of law and systematically ignoring the recommendations made by international human rights mechanisms. In 2025, they promoted a constitutional reform that abolished the separation of powers and subordinated the legislative, judicial and electoral branches to the Presidency.

More recently, in July 2026, hundreds of legal professionals were stripped of their licenses to practice, in what UN experts described as a purge of the legal profession that leaves victims of repression with virtually no access to independent legal representation.

“Behind every organization that has been shut down, every license revoked and every person stripped of their nationality is someone whom the

state has deprived of the ability to express themselves, organize and decide the future of their country. This is what the announcement seeks to turn into law,” added Ana Piquer.

Amnesty International urges the Nicaraguan authorities to refrain from adopting any law or reform aimed at eliminating or unduly restricting the right of people to participate in the public affairs of their country.

The authorities must guarantee periodic and genuine elections through universal suffrage and under conditions that ensure the free expression of the will of the electorate, in accordance with Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. They must also end all reprisals against those who exercise or promote this right, including restrictions on freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly that make effective civic and political participation impossible.

The organization also calls on the UN Human Rights Council and its member states to ensure that the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua specifically monitors the proposed legislative measures and their impacts.

Amnesty International further calls on other states not to recognize or normalize the suppression of this right as a sovereign domestic decision, and to raise the situation in all relevant multilateral forums, demanding that Nicaragua comply with all its binding obligations under international human rights law, particularly those it has voluntarily undertaken.

Amnesty International will monitor and analyze the proposed reforms and document their impact on the rights of Nicaraguans living in the country and those in exile.

