

SCHOOL ACTION PACK

TERM FOUR 2016

Write a letter, save a life

What you've achieved for Indigenous rights

End the secret abuse in Nauru

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Contents

SECTION 01 UPDATES

- 01.1 A note from Naomi
- 01.2 School updates
- 01.3 Music for summer

SECTION 02 CAMPAIGNS

- 02.1 Write for Rights
- 02.2 Three wins for Indigenous rights
- 02.3 End the secret abuse in Nauru



CAMPAIGN ACTIONS: AT A GLANCE

Campaign	Action	Target
Indigenous rights	Online activism	Your state Premier
Refugees	Letter writing	Immigration Minister Peter Dutton
Individuals at risk	Letter writing	Governments of Malawi, US and Cameroon

Cover: Save the Children and Amnesty International teamed up for this display outside Parliament House, Canberra, in September. The silhouettes represented the kids currently suffering from Australia's refugee policies.
© Save the Children

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.

A note from Naomi

Hope you all had a great break and are ready to go for the final term of 2016!

Term 3 was massive, and it was great to hear about your many events and activities right across the country.

Just a few highlights:

- The fantastic Amnesty Schools Conference in Victoria. Guest speakers included human rights lawyer Julian Burnside and the AIME crew.
- In Adelaide, Reconciliation SA's 2016 Schools Congress – a series of workshops that travelled from the city right out to Port Lincoln
- Everyone's amazing AmnesTEA events – the photos looked amazing!

For many of you, this might be your final few weeks at high school. I want to wish you all the very best with your final exams. If you're heading to university in 2017, keep an eye out for Amnesty on campus. There's a tonne of other ways to stay involved with Amnesty after school too – check out www.amnesty.org.au/become-an-activist and sign up.

Finally, from all of us at Amnesty – thank you for all your support and hard work in 2016. Your enthusiasm and commitment is helping to change the world and we can't wait to do it all again in 2017.

Take care,

Naomi

PS> Make sure you check out the amazing wins you've helped us achieve as part of our Community is Everything campaign ... again, thank you. :-)



School updates

Schools did some amazing work during Term 3!
Tilly from the Schools Outreach Team shares some highlights.
Share your school's highlights with us at youth@amnesty.org.au

Thank you to all the schools who took part in Refugee Week and NAIDOC week activities!



ENGADINE HIGH SCHOOL

The team at Engadine High School decked out in purple in August for Wear it Purple Day. Wear it Purple is a youth-led organisation that seeks to raise awareness about bullying based on sexuality and gender. Congratulations to Engadine High School on their great show of solidarity!

LURNEA HIGH SCHOOL

The students at Lurnea High School celebrated diversity in their school and community during Refugee Week 2016. The team got together to support refugees and people seeking asylum who are on Manus Island, Nauru or detained in Australia. Learn more about refugee rights in Section 2.2.

GERMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

The newest member of the NSW Schools Network, German International School, participated in Refugee Week and NAIDOC Week activities. There is lots to be excited about going forward at German International School.

AMNESTEA AT HILLCREST

Students held some spectacular AmnesTEAs in term 3 – huge thanks to everyone who got involved, ate cake and raised much-needed funds for human rights. We love these photos from Hillcrest Christian College!

SCHOOLS CONGRESS 2016

Amnesty activist Ainoa Cabada Rey discusses the Congress highlights.

Each year Reconciliation South Australia present a series of workshops called Schools Congress. Schools Congress is a great opportunity for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to learn and take action on issues involving racism.

Over the last five years, Amnesty International has partnered in the delivery of the Schools Congress program. This year the partnership expanded to include Reconciliation SA, ActNow Theatre for Social Change and Amnesty International and was an outstanding success.

One of the best parts of being part of the Schools Congress is hearing about the creative ways school groups engage with Amnesty International campaigns. Their action, voice and commitment to human rights is amazing!

1. Wear it Purple at Engadine High School; 2. Victorian Schools Conference; 3. Refugee Week celebrations at Lurnea High School; 4. Schools Congress 2016; 5. Julian Burnside speaks at the Victorian Schools Conference; 6–8. AmnesTEA at Hillcrest Christian College

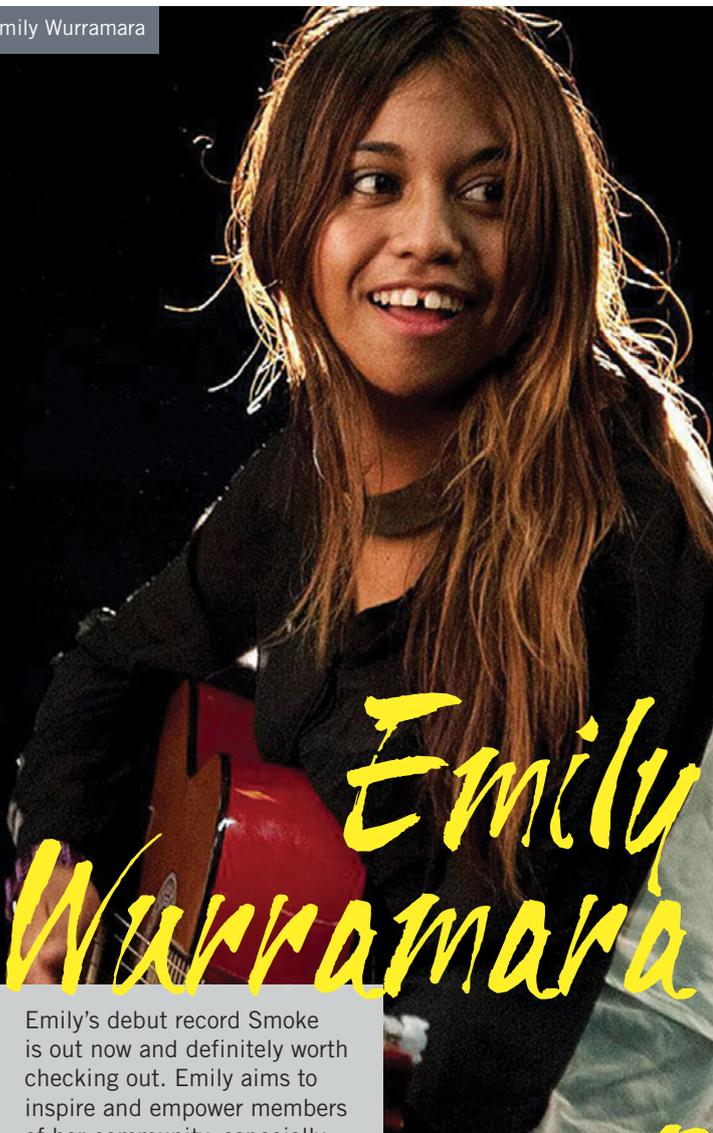
Music for summer

Music has always been part of social change movements. Spend some of your summer checking out these artists.

New Indigenous hip-hop out of Perth, Ziggy has been compared to Common and Lauryn Hill, and lists Charlie Perkins, Adam Goodes and Gary Foley as strong influences on his life. He told Triple J, "My whole life I've been extremely passionate about Indigenous rights ... Unfortunately in 2016 in Australia, we still don't have equality."

Ziggy

© Emily Wurramara



Emily Wurramara

Emily's debut record *Smoke* is out now and definitely worth checking out. Emily aims to inspire and empower members of her community, especially young Indigenous women, to find their voice. She sings original music in English and Anindilyakwa, her traditional language, and has played at Garma Festival, Island Vibes, Woodford Folk Festival and has just wrapped up a national tour of Australia.



© Ziggy



© A.B. Original

A.B. Original

Respectively coming from Yorta Yorta and Ngarrindjeri country, Briggs (Album of the Year, National Indigenous Music Awards 2015) and Trials (Funkoars) have collaborated to create A.B. Original. Both are socially conscious, outspoken Indigenous artists, so you know it's going to be good!

Write for Rights

Amnesty's global letter-writing moment, Write for Rights, is back again in November. Join millions of other supporters around the world in writing for people experiencing human rights abuses.

A LETTER FROM... PHYOE PHYOE AUNG

You wrote letters. You sent postcards. Your action as part of Write for Rights last year is the reason Myanmar student activist Phyo Phyo Aung is free today.

Dear friends,

I am Phyo Phyo Aung. Many of you campaigned for my release from prison, and sent me letters of support while I was in prison. I have been wanting to reply to you all since I was released – I would like to apologise to you for my late message.

As the daughter of a former political prisoner, I know very well the name of Amnesty International, and heard about your campaigns to free prisoners of conscience, including Aung San Suu Kyi, since I was young.

In 2015, I became an Amnesty International prisoner of conscience myself. After that, I received so many postcards, handmade cards with drawings of lovely animals full of warm wishes, encouraging letters and beautiful poems from people all across the world. I still receive your letters through Amnesty, as well as from political prisoners' organisations. I plan to collect some of these letters and cards and use them to create an archive of political prisoners' history.

I am so grateful to Amnesty and all of the people who participated in the campaign for my release. International movements like yours put pressure on governments for our physical freedom, but knowing we have your solidarity also supports us mentally. International organisations like Amnesty never forget the people who are facing injustice in their struggle for democracy and human rights. We need to be strong and remember how important it is to join together in our struggles.

Thank you very much each and every one of you. Not just for campaigning for my release, and the release of other prisoners, but for helping to keep our hope and our beliefs alive. I hope that together we will continue our struggle until our shared dream for human rights and justice for all come true.

Best regards,

Phyo Phyo Aung



Together we will continue our struggle until our shared dream for human rights and justice for all come true.

Phyo Phyo Aung



Phyo Phyo Aung with letters from Amnesty activists, December 2015.
© Mizzima News

REFRESH ME: WHAT IS WRITE FOR RIGHTS?

Write for Rights is Amnesty International’s annual global letter writing event that creates positive change for people who have, or are experiencing, human rights abuses. And it’s not just about letter writing – although that is still important. It’s about taking some form of action for one or more of the cases – signing a petition, tweeting or emailing a country leader, or drawing a picture for someone detained. You can even hold your own event and encourage others to take part.

Last year Amnesty supporters in 182 countries completed over 3.7 million actions as part of Write for Rights. In Australia we contributed 111,000 actions.

Does letter writing work?

But did all those letters actually achieve anything? Absolutely! You’ve already heard from Phyo Phyo Aung; here are the other people whose lives you changed through Write for Rights last year:

- The US released Albert Woodfox, 44 years after he was first placed in solitary confinement. More than 240,000 people called for his release.
- In February 2016 the Burkina Faso government affirmed its commitment to eradicating early and forced marriage for the girls and young women in Burkina Faso. Over 500,000 Amnesty supporters called for the protection of the girls.
- Yecenia Armenta was released from prison in June 2016. Mexican authorities had tortured her into confessing to murdering her husband. Over 300,000 supporters called for her release.
- Youth activists Fred Bauma and Yves Makawambala, who were imprisoned for promoting democracy in the Democratic Republic of Congo, were released in August 2016. On his release, Fred said, “I am happy to finally be free after more than 17 months of imprisonment. I thank Amnesty International and all those who fought in one way or the other for my release.”



Support for Write for Rights cases at a human rights festival in Western Sydney, December 2015. © AI



Write for Rights in Paraguay, December 2015. © AI

WRITE FOR RIGHTS

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL 



Privacy is the right to a free mind...
Without privacy, you can't have anything for yourself

Edward Snowden



An activist takes part in a letter writing event in Poland, December 2015. © Grzegorz Żukowski/AI Poland



When is it?

Write for Rights events will be happening across Australia from 25 November to 10 December 2016. You can write letters anytime though between now and 10 December.

Who can I campaign for this year?

School students can take action on the three cases below. You can also find additional Write for Rights cases at: www.amnesty.org.au



EDWARD SNOWDEN

When Edward Snowden shared United States intelligence documents with journalists in June 2013, he revealed the shocking extent of global mass surveillance.

He revealed to the world that governments are collecting and looking in on millions of people's private communications – including private emails, phone locations, web histories, and much, much more. Almost everything we do online can potentially be seen – and used – by those in power. That's a frightening power for governments to have over ordinary people.

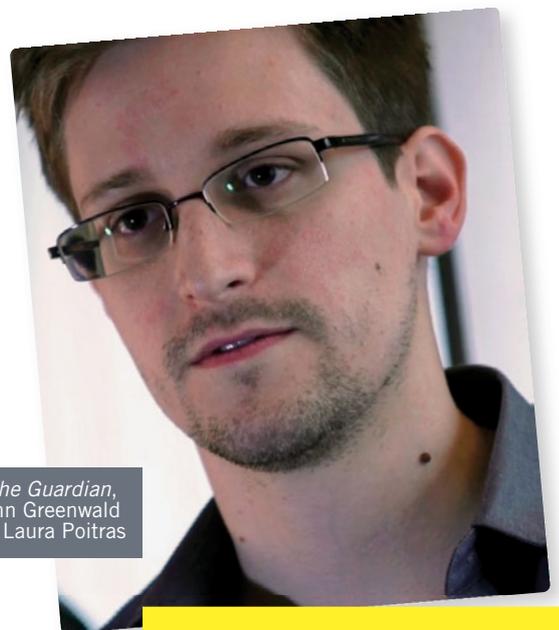
His courage changed the world. He sparked a global debate, changing laws and helping to protect our privacy. For the first time in 40 years, the US passed laws to control government surveillance. Globally, technology companies including Apple and WhatsApp are now doing more to protect our personal information.

None of this would have happened without Edward Snowden. A former US Attorney General admitted that Snowden's revelations "performed a public service". Even President Obama said that this debate about surveillance "will make us stronger".

Edward Snowden is a human rights hero. Yet he faces decades in prison, accused of selling secrets to enemies of the US.

With no guarantee of a fair trial in his home country, Edward Snowden has now been living in exile in Russia for more than three years. He can't go home. He can't visit family and friends. He needs to stay hidden, and he can't even travel to the countries which have offered him asylum. The US government has taken Edward's passport away, and pressured countries around the world not to let him pass through their airspace.

Tell President Obama to pardon Edward Snowden, a whistleblower who acted solely in the public interest.



© The Guardian, Glenn Greenwald and Laura Poitras

TAKE ACTION>>

Write to President Obama. Start your letter with 'Dear President Obama' and call on the President to:

- grant a Presidential Pardon to Edward Snowden in recognition of his actions as a whistleblower who spoke out to defend human rights.

ANNIE ALFRED

Annie Alfred is like any other child in Malawi. Her friends and family love her. Aged 10, she wants to be a nurse when she grows up. But she may never live to realise her ambitions because of people who believe her body has magic powers. These people think she's unhuman. They call her names like "ghost" or "money". They want to steal her hair or – worse – her bones.

Annie was born with albinism, an inherited condition that prevents her body from making enough colour, or melanin, to protect her skin from the sun. About 7,000–10,000 people in Malawi share Annie's condition. And they are all at risk of being hunted and killed by people who think their body parts will make them rich.

Attacks on people with albinism have seen a sharp rise since November 2014. In 2015 alone, there were 45 reports of actual or attempted murder and abduction.

People like Annie have nowhere safe to go. It isn't just criminals who will kidnap them, but family members, too. They think that people with albinism are gold that can be snatched and sold. Annie and others like her need the full protection of the law.

Demand that Malawi protect people with albinism from murder.

© Zac Darkes



TAKE ACTION>>

Write to the President of Malawi

Start your letter with 'Your Excellency'. Call on the President to:

- protect people with albinism against abductions, killings and attacks
- investigate all reports of abuses and those found responsible be brought to justice
- support public programs that challenge negative attitudes towards people with albinism.

FOMUSOH IVO FEH

Fomusoh Ivo Feh had a bright future ahead of him. He was just about to start university in Cameroon, where he lives. But an SMS message changed everything.

One day, Ivo received a text message from a friend, saying: "Boko Haram recruits young people from 14 years old and above. Conditions for recruitment: 4 subjects at GCE, including religion". His friend's message was a comment on how difficult it is to find a good job without being highly qualified – joking that even Boko Haram (an armed group) won't take you unless you do well in your exams. Ivo forwarded the message to a friend, who sent it to a friend in secondary school. A teacher saw the text, having confiscated the phone, and showed it to the police.

Ivo, his friend and the young student were all arrested sometime between September and December 2014. The charges against them include trying to organise a rebellion against the state. Right now, they are in prison facing a trial and a 20-year prison sentence.

Demand that Cameroon drop all charges against Ivo and his friends and let them go.

© Private



TAKE ACTION>>

Write to the President of Cameroon. Start your letter with 'Your Excellency' and call on the President to:

- drop all charges against Fomusoh Ivo Feh and his two friends and immediately release them
- pending their release, ensure they are not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment and they have regular access to family, their lawyer and all basic necessities.

POST DETAILS

Post all your letters to: Write for Rights, Locked Bag 23, Broadway, NSW 2007.

Return your letters by 16 December 2016 so we can send them on to the authorities, add them to our global letter-writing tally and let Edward and Annie know how many people have written on their behalf!

Got more time?

Get more people involved with Write for Rights.

You could set up a letter writing afternoon in your school library, or speak about a case at assembly.

Three wins for Indigenous rights

Thanks to the hard work of activists all around the country, there is lots of good news to share about our campaign to reduce the number of young Indigenous people in the justice system. Together we've made a huge difference for Indigenous rights in 2016!

On the next page are three things really worth celebrating.

CAMPAIGN SNAPSHOT

Goal End the over-representation of Indigenous kids in the justice system.

Why? Because our government is sending children as young as 10 to jail, and the courts do this to so many more children who are Indigenous. If you are an Indigenous young person, you are 24 times more likely to be sent to prison than a non-Indigenous young person.

How? By changing unfair laws and holding governments to account for inaction on this issue, and by championing Indigenous-led programs that help kids as alternatives to prison.



Mural in Toowoomba, Queensland, 2015.
© Adnate

TAKE ACTION>>

1. Kids to be moved out of Queensland adult prisons

In August the Queensland Government announced that it will transfer 17-year-old teenagers out of adult prisons within 12 months.

The Queensland government announced the change one week after Amnesty released a report on Indigenous kids in QLD detention. This will bring Queensland into step with the rest of Australia, and in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Currently Queensland is the only state in Australia where 17-year-olds are tried as adults and sent to adult prisons. This is despite the fact that 17-year-olds are technically still children.

“Sending kids to adult prisons doesn’t give them the best chance of leading positive lives, and it’s part of the reason why Indigenous kids find it hard to get out of the quicksand of the justice system,” says Amnesty’s Indigenous Rights Advisor, Rodney Dillon.

2. Amnesty activists meet Malcolm Turnbull

A massive high five to Amnesty’s Eastern Suburbs action group who met with the Prime Minister in October to discuss Indigenous kids and the justice system.

The Eastern Suburbs group, alongside Aboriginal youth worker Keenan Mundine, handed to the Prime Minister our 16,000+ petition calling on the government to set targets to reduce the numbers of Indigenous people in prison.

Mr Turnbull said that he will raise the issue of child protection in youth detention centres when he next meets with state and territory governments in December. He also said that he supports Indigenous-led programs as alternatives to detention, stating “We need to work with Aboriginal people, not for them”.

3. Investigation called for Northern Territory youth detention

In July the TV news program *Four Corners* exposed horrific abuse of kids at Don Dale youth detention centre in the Northern Territory. Within hours of the footage going to air, Malcolm Turnbull called a Royal Commission to investigate the situation in the Northern Territory.

In response to the *Four Corners* episode, Indigenous people and supporters across the country pointed out that this is an issue all across Australia that demands national leadership. All children in detention must be protected, and more importantly, we need to stop so many Indigenous children being sent to detention in the first place.

Let your Premier know you’re concerned about the over-representation of Indigenous kids in the justice system. Track down the social media details of your Premier and share your support for Indigenous kids.

Example posts

Twitter: @_____ kids don’t belong behind bars. Support national action to help close the justice gap.

Facebook: Hi _____, I’m a student in your state/territory and I’m concerned about the over-representation of indigenous kids in prisons. Kids don’t belong behind bars. Support national action to help close the justice gap.

PS National Children’s Week is the last week in October. This is a great opportunity to make use of a public moment to get in touch with your Premier.

WHAT’S NEXT?

While this year we’ve heard heaps of positive moves from government, Indigenous kids are still 24 times more likely to be sent to prison than their non-Indigenous classmates.

Children who’ve made small mistakes should not be ripped from their communities and put into the prison system so young. Instead, there are many programs for children who need more guidance, led by Indigenous Elders. They can keep many children away from the quicksand of the prison system, and they need our support.

This is why we’ll continue campaigning in 2017 for Indigenous kids.

Malcolm in the middle! Amnesty’s Eastern Suburbs group and Keenan Mundine meet with the Prime Minister in Sydney, October 2016. © AI



TAKE ACTION>>

End the secret abuse in Nauru

In July 2016 Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch teamed up for an investigation inside Nauru to uncover the treatment of people searching for protection and freedom.

“A SYSTEM OF DELIBERATE ABUSE”

The investigation found that men, women and children on Nauru suffered from routine neglect and at times were denied medical care.

Dr Anna Neistat, Amnesty International’s most senior researcher, says that the Australian Government has designed a system of deliberate abuse on Nauru. “I’ve conducted over 60 investigations into human rights abuses in countries like Afghanistan, Syria, Zimbabwe, China but few other countries go to such lengths to deliberately inflict suffering on people searching for safety and freedom” says Anna Neistat. “I was not expecting this kind of shocking abuse.”

SECRECY

Despite the wall of secrecy built by the Australian and Nauruan governments, Amnesty and Human Rights Watch managed to interview 84 refugees and people seeking asylum. We also interviewed several staff who provide services to the people detained. They talked to us despite the fact that the Australian Government has banned staff from talking about what’s happening in the detention centres.

“The extent of the secrecy relating to the Australian Government’s operations on Nauru is one of the most shocking features. In 15 years I have never encountered this level of government cover-up. The gagging of service providers was unprecedented. It without doubt enables – and encourages – an abusive situation.”

Write to the Hon Peter Dutton, Minister for Immigration and Border Protection. In your letter, call on the Australian Government to:

- settle in Australia all the people assessed to be refugees
- assess all people applying for refugee status in the Australian community
- close the Regional Processing Centre on Nauru.

Post your letters to the Minister’s Office at Parliament House:
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600



An Iranian refugee sits in an abandoned phosphate mine on Nauru, December 2014. © Rêmi Chauvin



Refugee children take part in a protest in March 2015 against their resettlement on Nauru and living conditions on the island. © Private



Thousands of people march through the streets of central London in support of refugees, September 2015. © AI