

Joint Statement for the International Day of Political Prisoners on October 30

On this International Day of Political Prisoners, we stand together to affirm a simple truth: no one should be imprisoned for speaking freely, standing up for their beliefs, or exercising their fundamental rights.

Yet more than one million people around the world are imprisoned for political reasons. They are journalists, human rights defenders, writers, democratic opposition leaders, religious leaders, artists, and ordinary citizens. They are people who spoke, wrote, protested, prayed, created, or simply refused to remain silent in the face of injustice.

Political imprisonment is meant to do more than punish one person. It is meant to frighten everyone around them. Every unjust sentence sends a message to neighbors, colleagues, congregations, newsrooms, and families: stay silent, do not ask questions, do not challenge those in power.

On 30 October 1974, Soviet dissidents Kronid Lyubarsky and Oleksii Murzhenko, who were serving time in a Mordovia prison camp, sent a message back. They and other prisoners joined together in a one-day hunger strike to defy their captors and call for recognition of their status as political prisoners. In the years since, October 30 has become an international day of solidarity with political prisoners marked by remembrances around the world.

It is in this spirit that we call on democracies and all free people to make the freedom of political prisoners a global priority. Raise their cases. Ask for answers. Demand their immediate and unconditional release. Support accountability. Stand behind the organizations providing legal and humanitarian assistance to prisoners and their families. Keep their names in public view until the prison doors open.

We stand with the families, lawyers, advocates, and civic groups who refuse to let political prisoners disappear from public view. Their persistence reminds us that solidarity is not a single act. It is a commitment. It must be sustained, coordinated, and visible.

On the evening of October 30, we will renew our commitment to this cause at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., and in commemorations around the world, and shine a light on those whose memory dictators would keep dark.

On October 30, we will say their names.

Every name belongs to a person. Every person has a family, a story, and a claim to freedom. Every name we speak is a declaration that imprisonment will not erase them from the world's conscience.

Freedom starts with a name.

We will remember their names.

We will stand with their families.

We will keep pressing for their freedom.

Free them all.

To sign this statement, please fill out the following form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1TCRMrSf3CbTm0w4vkjOfrezLZJ725ZN7hMUqi_B6sJI

Organizational Signatories as of October 19, 2026:

1. 30 October Foundation *
2. Advocates for Political Prisoners
3. Asociación Memoria y Justicia
4. Azda.tv – Tajik Language Media in Exile
5. Canada-Hong Kong Link
6. Centro de Asistencia Legal Interamericano en Derechos Humanos (CALIDH)
7. Centro de Información y Servicios de Asesoría en Salud - CISAS
8. Colectivo de Derechos Humanos Nicaragua Nunca Más.
9. Committee to Protect Journalists
10. COMPTE À REBOURS RDC
11. Egyptian Front for Human Rights
12. End Arbitrary Detention
13. European Belarus Foundation
14. Filimbi
15. Forum des droits humains
16. Free Russia Foundation *
17. Free Them One by One *
18. Freedom House *
19. Genuine Greek Orthodox Church
20. Houses NGO
21. Human Rights Foundation *
22. Institute for Peace & Development IPADES
23. International Campaign for Tibet
24. International Press Institute
25. Iran Human Rights (IHRNGO)

26. Iran Human Rights Documentation Center
27. Khmer Movement for Democracy
28. Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice *
29. Luke Alliance
30. McCain Institute, John McCain Freedom for Political Prisoners Initiative *
31. MEMORIAL Deutschland e. V.
32. Myanmar Peace Museum
33. National Endowment for Democracy *
34. Nicaraguan Freedom Foundation
35. Open Azerrbaijan Initiative (sic)
36. OVD-Info
37. PEN America
38. PEN Canada
39. Political prisoner support team - world liberty congress (sic)
40. Political Prisoners Support. Memorial' Project (sic)
41. Public Initiative Center (Azerbaijan)
42. RADDE, prodémocracy non-violent mouvement (sic)
43. Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights *
44. RCDA Russian Canadian Democratic Alliance
45. Syria Justice and Accountability Centre (SJAC)
46. The Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation
47. Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea (UFDG)
48. URAP
49. Uyghur Human Rights Project
50. VietTan
51. Women's Justice movement
52. World Liberty Congress *
53. Yekmal e.V.

Individual signatories as of October 19, 2026:

1. Abeer rlssa, Journalist (sic)
2. Ahmed Attalla - Egyptian Front for Human Rights
3. Ana Quiros Viquez - Feminist and human rights defender
4. Andrei Sannikov, Chairman, European Belarus Foundation
5. Andy Wong, Canada-Hong Kong Link
6. Azadeh Afsahi, LMFT — Human Rights Psychotherapist; Founder & President, Houses NGO (Iran House)
7. Cellou Dalein Diallo, Président of UFDG
8. Corey Jackson, President, Luke Alliance
9. Danny Ramírez-Ayérdiz, Secretario General, CALIDH
10. Dr. Vera Ammer

11. Father Evaggelos, Dean for Hispanic America
12. Helena Huong Nguyen, Human rights advocate-VietTan
13. Hoda Khamosh
14. Human Rights Defender
15. Leonid Drabkin, OVD-Info
16. Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, Director, Iran Human Rights (IHRNGO)
17. Mehmet Tohti, Director, URAP
18. Omer Kanat, Executive Director of the Uyghur Human Rights Project
19. Peter Pizano, CEO and Founder, Free Them One by One (FT1by1)
20. Sai, founder of Myanmar Peace Museum
21. Shahin Milani
22. Sochua Mu, President, Khmer Movement for Democracy
23. Zhala Bayramova, Legal Coordinator, Public Initiative Center (Azerbaijan)
24. Zohrab Ismayil, Co-founder of the Open Azerbaijan Initiative