

# **La lettre d'information du PEN Club français**

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**Organisation mondiale d'Écrivains accréditée auprès de l'UNESCO**

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## ÉDITORIAL



*Par Monique Calinon*

*Chers Amis,*

Quel bien étrange moment pour rédiger mon premier « édito » : nous voici tous en confinement ! Comment ne pas l'évoquer ? C'est un réel temps de pause, de retour sur soi un peu inquiet, mais aussi quelque chose à inventer, comme tous ces liens qui s'activent par tous les canaux possibles, se téléphonent, se peignent et s'écrivent peut-être... L'idéal pour vous adresser ces quelques mots ? Même si ce que nous traversons ces premiers jours (et pour combien de semaines ?) n'a rien de comparable à ce dont peuvent souffrir les écrivains et les intellectuels qui sont au cœur de l'activité du PEN international et donc du nôtre, cet enfermement très relatif, salvateur et dans des conditions somme toute assez confortables, peut nous renvoyer en pensée à des désespoirs et des terreurs réels.

J'avais pensé, mis à part ce début qui nous tombe soudain du ciel sombre de la pandémie, évoquer un acte personnel dont je ne m'explique pas

encore tout à fait le ressort. Oh ! Rien d'héroïque ! Cependant un souvenir pour la vie, que j'ai même eu l'occasion de narrer à Robert Badinter... Et qui en fut ému.

En classe de troisième, en 1972-73, au temps où une gamine très bonne élève et plutôt sage (quoique déjà avec un soupçon d'impertinence, vous me connaissez !) se repaissait avidement de *Polyeucte*, du *Rouge et Noir* in extenso et de *L'Étranger* (pas mal, le programme, hein ?) il lui prit à la fin de l'étude de l'œuvre de Camus, de se lever tout à coup en classe — cela se faisait peu et même pas du tout ! — et de lancer : « Je ne serai plus jamais pour la peine de mort ! » Sidération et bonheur de ma prof adorée et très fameuse, et étonnement amusé de la plupart de mes camarades.

Et si c'était pour ce souvenir que je suis avec vous tous ? Et avec toute l'immense chère communauté de ceux qui lisent et écrivent et qui peuvent être inquiétés simplement de ce fait. On sait parfois où quelque chose a pu s'ancrer : il m'a été insupportable à 14 ans que Meursault meure.

Être avec vous tous pour des moments plein de ferveur du point de vue de la culture, mais aussi — ou surtout — de l'engagement.

Être au Pen club depuis des années (eh oui !), comme je fus déjà, plus jeune, à Amnesty International France, et j'y ai resongé avec l'exemple que notre amie Michèle Gautard nous a donné dans son récent éditto, celui de Dawit Isaak, dont on ne sait plus rien depuis près de vingt ans, et qui m'a, moi aussi, comme abasourdie, pendant que nous recevions des représentants du Comité de la Paix : finalement, c'est toujours le même désir de servir quelque chose et à quelque chose, un tant soit peu.

Servir la liberté de pensée et d'expression, lutter contre la bêtise cruelle et rapidement dangereuse, tenter d'abattre les discours de haine à l'inflation galopante, réfléchir à la position de ceux qui tiennent une plume ou dont les doigts dansent ou courent sur un clavier, parfois avec allégresse, mais aussi bien trop souvent dans l'urgence et le risque, aider au traitement de cas inquiétants et dramatiques... Partout, le plus possible, participer à

faire entendre la voix d'écrivains et d'intellectuels plongés dans l'adversité.

Pour prendre un exemple tout neuf, quoi de plus nécessaire que de tenter de peser, avec le trébuchet le plus sensible possible, les justes mots à propos des maux réels de notre époque, comme lors de notre dernier Comité, en mars : grâce à notre ami Antoine Spire, pour cette fois-là, qui avait préparé la réflexion sur les écrivains et les mouvements sociaux. Se frotter aux concepts et aux termes qui peuvent le mieux les décrire crée des moments de plus en plus nécessaires, en un temps où les mots sont à nouveau frelatés de la manière la plus délétère, et cela dans une belle fraternité des débats. Voilà qui fournit un très bon carburant au moteur de notre action et nous ramène au cœur de celle-ci.

Nous avons tous au Pen Club français nos origines, notre histoire, parfois notre œuvre, nos talents plus ou moins affirmés, nos aspirations, notre humour, il faut l'espérer... Nous formons une petite société qui peut avoir ses difficultés propres, comme toute société, même « micro », mais aussi nous visons à entretenir un but commun, défendre, défendre, défendre, quels que soient les moyens, moments d'intensité et forces que nous y mettons. En tout cas, c'est pour ce fond commun que je suis heureuse d'être « revenue » parmi vous plus fermement et avec davantage de constance et d'imagination.

**À la UNE**

## **Le PEN Club perd un ami**



### **Mort de Jacques De Decker, l'homme qui écrivait dans les trois langues de Belgique**

Le carnet et les instants - 13.04.2020

Edition - International - Jacques Decker décès - Jacques Decker Belgique - Belgique mort écrivain

**Nous apprenons le décès, survenu le 12 avril au soir, de Jacques De Decker (né le 19 août 1945), écrivain, passeur de littérature et secrétaire perpétuel honoraire de l'Académie royale de langue et littérature françaises de Belgique.**

Germaniste de l'ULB, Jacques De Decker a consacré son mémoire au théâtre d'Hugo Claus. Un geste qui témoigne déjà de son intérêt pour le théâtre, les littératures non francophones – et particulièrement la littérature flamande. Il se lance rapidement dans l'adaptation d'œuvres théâtrales : de Shakespeare, Goethe, Strindberg ou Tchekhov, il reprend les œuvres et les adapte pour la scène belge francophone.

Adaptateur, il l'est pour le cinéma, collaborant étroitement dans les années 1970 avec le réalisateur Jean-Pierre Berckmans. *Isabelle devant le désir* est ainsi une adaptation de *La Délice* de Maud Frère.

Enseignant à l'École d'Interprètes Internationaux de l'Université de Mons (langue et culture néerlandaises), à l'INSAS, au Conservatoire de Bruxelles (histoire du Théâtre), il devient en 1971 critique littéraire pour le journal *Le Soir*, dont il dirigera le service culturel de 1985 à 1990. Plusieurs recueils rassemblent ses articles critiques, notamment *La Brosse à relire*, ouvrage réédité dans la collection « Espace Nord » en 2015.

En 1985, il publie son premier roman, *La Grande Roue*. Le livre figurera dans la première sélection du prix Goncourt. Son deuxième roman, *Parades amoureuses* (1990) figurera dans celle du Renaudot. En 1996, *Le Ventre de la baleine* s'inspire des interrogations laissées par l'affaire Cools.

Homme de théâtre, romancier et critique, Jacques De Decker est également un éminent biographe, avec des livres consacrés notamment à Ibsen et Wagner. Il est élu à l'Académie royale de langue et littérature françaises de Belgique (ARLLFB) le 8 mars 1997, au fauteuil 8. Accueilli par Jean Tordeur, qui l'avait fait entrer au *Soir*, il succède à Albert Ayguesparse. En 1998, il relance *Marginales*, la revue créée par son prédécesseur.

En 2006, le germaniste est élu à la Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal en Letteren, pendant flamand de l'ARLLFB.

Animateur littéraire, observateur avisé et défenseur des littératures belges, il devient secrétaire perpétuel de l'ARLLFB en 2002. Une fonction qu'il quitte à la fin de l'année 2019, et à laquelle lui a succédé Yves Namur. Il a toutefois gardé un rôle actif au sein de l'institution : secrétaire perpétuel honoraire, il était en charge de l'organisation des manifestations commémorant le centenaire de l'ARLLFB, créée en 1920.

Dans une interview accordée à la revue *Le Carnet et les Instants* à la fin de l'année 2019, celui qui était encore secrétaire perpétuel pour quelques semaines évoquait le rôle de l'Académie et son importance dans les temps troublés que nous vivons. Un entretien à retrouver ici.

Avec Le Carnet et les Instants

**Le Carnet et les Instants**

Revue des Lettres belges francophones

## **Le Pen Club de France vient de rendre hommage**

### **à Jacques De Decker :**

*Le PEN club français, l'ensemble de son Comité et de ses membres, en particulier ceux engagés dans le dialogue de la francophonie, adressent à tous les membres du PEN club Belgique et aux proches de Jacques De Decker, ses plus sincères condoléances.*

*Nous mesurons d'autant plus la perte que nous subissons tous que Jacques était venu avec beaucoup d'humanité et de bienveillance, tout grand lettré qu'il restera à nos yeux, dans nos esprits et dans nos bibliothèques, participer à nos Rencontres de Paris en janvier dernier.*



## DU CÔTÉ DES AUTEURS



### Livres Hebdo

Par [Vincy Thomas](#), le 01.04.2020 à 16h17 (mis à jour le 01.04.2020 à 17h02) Crise sanitaire

## Auteurs : le CPE réclame des ajustements aux mesures gouvernementales

**Selon le Conseil permanent des écrivains, les mesures gouvernementales ne prennent pas en compte les spécificités des revenus d'auteurs. Le CPE appelle déjà à une augmentation du Fonds d'aide d'urgence alloué au CNL.**

C'est un jeu de ping-pong entre le gouvernement et les associations défendant les auteurs. A chaque déclaration du ministère de la Culture, les organismes répondent et réclament plus d'efficacité, de rapidité et de précisions sur les mesures annoncées. Il semblerait que les dernières mesures annoncées vendredi par Franck Riester, ministre de la Culture, n'aient pas convaincu complètement puisque, après la SGDL hier, c'est au tour du Conseil permanent des écrivains (CPE) de réagir.

Le CPE salue l'engagement pris par le ministre de la Culture de venir en soutien des auteurs durablement affectés par la crise sanitaire mais continue de s'inquiéter « *de l'incapacité actuelle des pouvoirs publics à prendre en compte techniquement les spécificités des revenus d'auteurs, par nature irréguliers, pour qu'ils bénéficient effectivement "d'un grand nombre des mesures d'urgence transversales annoncées par le gouvernement" »*.

### Une mesure inadaptée

Rappelant que le versement d'aides financières aux personnes physiques et morales de droit privé exerçant une activité économique, plafonnée à 1500 euros par mois, est conditionné à une baisse de revenus de 70% en mars 2020 par rapport à mars 2019, les organisations professionnelles membres du CPE "n'ont de cesse d'attirer la vigilance des pouvoirs publics sur le caractère

*particulièrement aléatoire et irrégulier du versement des droits d'auteur (date aléatoire d'un à-valoir d'une année sur l'autre, date aléatoire de la participation à une manifestation, rencontre publique, atelier d'écriture, intervention dans un établissement scolaire...). Dans ces conditions, il est peu probable que cette mesure d'urgence, si elle n'est pas aménagée rapidement, puisse bénéficier aux auteurs."*

*"Il en est de même du report ou étalement des loyers, des factures d'eau, de gaz et d'électricité qui obéit aux mêmes critères d'éligibilité que l'aide financière", affirme le CPE.*

Aussi, le conseil interpelle le gouvernement pour que les modalités pratiques de ces mesures soient aménagées concernant les artistes auteurs *"afin de prendre en compte, le cas échéant une période de revenus excédant le mois"*, tout comme doivent être adaptés les dispositifs d'arrêts maladie liés au maintien à domicile afin de garantir l'accès aux droits à l'assurance maladie des auteurs.

Enfin, le CPE souhaite que les auteurs puissent bénéficier rapidement des crédits mobilisés par le CNL au titre du fonds d'aide d'urgence (5 M€), *"afin de compenser l'ensemble des pertes de revenus constatées au cours de l'année 2020"* et qu'il faudra sans doute compléter pour tenir compte des pertes de revenus différées dans le temps.





# DU CÔTÉ DES AUTEURS

**Les espoirs soulevés chez les auteurs par le rapport Racine ont précipité une crise parmi les nombreuses organisations qui se disputent leur représentation. La légitimité des plus anciennes se trouve contestée par une nouvelle génération plus précaire qui s'estime mal considérée. - par Hervé Hugueny.**

Pendant les prochaines semaines, le complet bouleversement imposé par le confinement de tous et l'arrêt de toute vie sociale ou culturelle collective vont faire passer au second plan les polémiques concernant la représentativité des organisations d'auteurs. Mais les problèmes à l'origine du départ, le 25 février, de la jeune Ligue des auteurs professionnels et de la Charte des auteurs et illustrateurs jeunesse du Conseil permanent des écrivains (CPE) n'en seront pas résolus pour autant. Autre signe de cette crise de la représentation des auteurs, le départ forcé de Mathieu Simonet de la présidence de la Société des gens de lettres (SGDL), à la suite d'un vote de défiance de son comité, le 10 mars, révèle un niveau de tension jusqu'alors inconnu au sein de la plus importante et de la plus structurée des associations d'auteurs, située à l'hôtel de Massa, dans le 14<sup>e</sup> arrondissement de Paris.

Simplement mis en pause, l'enjeu des suites à donner au rapport Racine devrait resurgir intact à en juger par l'énergie et la détermination manifestées par la nouvelle génération d'auteurs mûris ces dernières années aux États généraux de la Bande dessinée ou à La Charte des auteurs jeunesse, qui se retrouvent à la Ligue. Lors du dernier week-end de liberté précédent le blackout sanitaire imposé par la lutte contre le coronavirus, la Ligue présidée par Samantha Bailly, tout récemment réélue, coordonnait au Labo de l'édition, à Paris, un « hackaton » entre auteurs, avocats et juristes professionnels. Ce marathon de réflexion étalé sur 24 heures a produit plusieurs pistes de transformation du contrat d'édition, de réorganisation de la représentation des auteurs et de solutions pour lutter contre la sous-utilisation de leurs droits sociaux.

## **Un nécessaire consensus**

Autant de dossiers concrets à discuter lors de la révision de l'accord signé en 2013 sur le nouveau contrat d'édition à l'ère numérique, qui devait commencer dans les prochains jours sous l'égide du ministère de la Culture. La représentation des auteurs sera bien différente de l'unité affichée audébut de la décennie 2010. La Charte des auteurs et illustrateurs jeunesse a quitté le CPE, comme la Ligue, créée en septembre 2018, qui n'aura finalement que brièvement rejoint cette fédération « un peu polymorphe, mouvante, dont la physionomie change avec le temps », selon Bessora, sa présidente depuis septembre 2019.

Les adhérents du Conseil permanent des écrivains ne sont pas des individus mais seize associations, sociétés, syndicats d'auteurs et organismes de gestion collective. Ils délèguent leurs représentants, élus et/ou salariés pour ceux qui en disposent, et en assurent le budget, très modeste à 6 000 euros, via leurs cotisations. Si l'expression de tous est libre lors des réunions mensuelles et des discussions intermédiaires, le consensus doit réguler les décisions. Cela peut prendre du temps, même si le noyau vraiment actif de ses membres se

concentre autour du SNAC, de la SGDL, de la SCAM, de la SAIF et de l'ATLF (cf. infographie). « Le CPE travaille et ne communique pas sur tout ce qu'il entreprend, il reste un peu dans l'ombre ça peut paraître suspect, laisser penser qu'on ne fait rien », déplore Bessora. Alors que « nous réglons de nombreux problèmes particuliers au service des auteurs, mais ces négociations ne se tiennent pas sur la place publique », observe Marc-Antoine Boidin, vice-président du SNAC, chargé du groupe BD.

Créé en 1979 pour préparer la loi sur le prix du livre, le CPE s'est réactivé à la fin des années 2000 lorsqu'un premier round de négociation entre la seule Société des gens de lettres (SGDL) et le Syndicat national de l'édition (SNE) à propos de l'édition numérique avait échoué. Les discussions ont abouti en mars 2013 à la signature avec le SNE de l'accord-cadre relatif « au contrat d'édition à l'ère numérique ». Présenté comme exemplaire d'une nouvelle ère de dialogue constructif et efficace, ce résultat devait beaucoup à l'intervention d'Aurélié Filippetti, ministre de la Culture en 2012, qui avait dû admonester le SNE pour débloquer une négociation que le CPE ne pouvait maîtriser seul.

Porté par la volonté de dialogue de Vincent Montagne, président du SNE à partir de 2012, et de Marie Sellier, présidente de la Charte, du CPE puis de la SGDL, cet accord a quand même été suivi d'une série d'autres compromis, jusqu'au blocage sur le partage de la valeur et la revendication de 10 % de droits d'auteur minimum, au cœur de la deuxième session des États généraux du livre, organisés le 4 juin 2019 par le CPE. Les appels de Marie Sellier à ouvrir un nouveau cycle de discussion sur le sujet n'ont pas été entendus par les éditeurs, et l'agenda de projets de réunions CPE/SNE s'est enlisé.

« Nous alertons depuis longtemps sur la dégradation de la situation des auteurs, mais on ne nous écoute pas. Est-ce qu'il y a un problème de représentation, ou de surdité ? », s'interroge Emmanuel de Rengervé, délégué général du Syndicat national des auteurs et compositeurs, qui héberge le CPE à son siège, rue Taitbout dans le 9<sup>e</sup> arrondissement. « Les auteurs ne sont pas mal représentés, ils sont mal entendus », tranche Bessora, en réponse au rapport Racine qui attribue ce déficit de dialogue social à la faiblesse et à l'insuffisance de leur représentation. Qu'il soit imputé aux pouvoirs publics (affaires de la retraite complémentaire, compensation de la CSG, modalités de transfert à l'Urssaf) ou du SNE (niveau des droits), le manque de considération ressenti par une partie des auteurs a nourri l'impatience à l'égard d'un style de négociation feutré reposant sur l'argumentation juridique et le lobbying auprès des parlementaires et du ministère de la Culture.

### **Parole publique**

« On nous reproche de ne pas être assez pushy, mais on fait le boulot, quand même », s'insurge Hervé Rony, directeur général de la Société civile des auteurs multimédia (SCAM), un puissant organisme de gestion collective (OGC), élément actif du CPE. Mais « cette

stratégie a montré ses limites, notamment à propos des discussions attendues sur le partage de la valeur. La nouvelle génération souhaite des actions plus offensives », analyse Benoît Peeters. Scénariste de la série BD *Les Cités obscures*, écrivain, essayiste, biographe, cofondateur et président des États généraux de la bande dessinée, il est très investi dans la vie collective du secteur, et a adhéré dès sa création à la Ligue, où il est naturellement devenu un référent.

Également président de la commission des auteurs de l'écrit de la SCAM, Benoît Peeters trace la limite du rôle des OGC, acceptées au CPE mais vivement contestés par le mouvement qui s'en est écarté. « Pour collecter les droits collectifs qu'elle répartit entre ses adhérents, une OGC doit être aussi bien structurée que les groupes avec lesquels elle négocie, elle a besoin de cadres et de techniciens qui ne sont pas des auteurs, mais cette nécessité l'éloigne du terrain. Il faut donc des syndicats, qui sont par nature plus proches des réalités sociales », estime le biographe d'Hergé.

« Notre objectif est bien de devenir un syndicat, sur le modèle d'une organisation puissante telle l'AuthorsGuild aux États-Unis. Être syndicat est une condition pour se présenter à des élections professionnelles en France », confirme Samantha Bailly, qui a su convaincre plusieurs auteurs de best-sellers, habituellement indifférents à l'action collective, de rejoindre la Ligue. « Nous avons été capables de mobiliser 3 500 artistes-auteurs en quelques jours pour exiger la publication du rapport Racine », rappelle-t-elle.

Alors que le CPE obtenait encore des résultats dans la concertation, d'autres actions basées sur la prise de parole publique et l'usage des réseaux sociaux ont émergé, avec un succès grandissant. Ces actions ont d'abord visé les pouvoirs publics et le ministère de la Culture, dans un mélange d'humour et d'amertume, puis le SNE, notamment avec la campagne #PayeTonAuteur lors de Livre Paris 2018, menée avec le SNAC, qui n'avait pas encore pris ses distances.

### Les raisons de la rupture

:Quatre désaccords principaux expliquent que la Ligue des auteurs professionnels et la Charte des auteurs et illustrateurs jeunesse aient claqué la porte du conseil permanent des écrivains (CPE) :

Elections professionnelles : la Ligue et la Charte les jugent indispensables, le CPE est plus réservé.

Contrat de commande : indispensable selon la Ligue et la Charte, alors que la SGDL craint une dénaturation du droit d'auteur.

Relations avec le SNE : la Ligue juge le CPE trop faible dans ses positions.

Rapport Racine : la Ligue et la Charte souhaitent l'application de toutes ses recommandations, le CPE s'en tient aux mesures retenues par le ministre de la Culture.

Tout s'est tendu avec le rapport Racine, qui a soulevé chez les auteurs un vif espoir, contrarié ensuite par les mesures annoncées par le ministre de la Culture, Franck Riester. La suite à donner à la mission cristallise une fracture qui distingue des organisations rompues à la négociation et trop conscientes du rapport de force, de celles dont l'énergie nouvelle n'est pas entravée par l'expérience des possibles. « Après le rapport, c'est le plan d'action du ministre qui sert de base de discussion », note Bessora, alors que la Ligue et la Charte veulent tenir pour acquises les 23 recommandations de la mission et les mettre en œuvre sans tarder. Avec la Guilde des scénaristes, où se retrouvent aussi de nombreux auteurs, et le Comité des Artistes-Auteurs Plasticiens (CAAP), maintenant élargi à l'ensemble des auteurs et dont l'expertise juridique et sociale est reconnue, ces organisations constituent le noyau d'un groupement transversal bien décidé à transformer la condition des créateurs. « **Il faut des élections** »

Directrice de l'Institut des sciences du travail de l'ouest, à Rennes, Stéphanie Le Cam est également enseignante et chercheuse en droit de la propriété intellectuelle et droit du travail. Sa thèse sur *L'auteur professionnel, entre droit d'auteur et droit social* (LexisNexis, 2014) a retenu l'attention de Bruno Racine, qui l'a invitée à se joindre aux travaux de sa mission.

Livres Hebdo : Comment interprétez-vous l'émergence d'un pôle plus revendicatif parmi les organisations d'artistes-auteurs ?

Stéphanie Le Cam : C'est un phénomène de génération dû à la précarisation sans précédent de l'activité d'auteur, qui entraîne le regroupement de gens unis par une nécessité ressentie de contestation sociale. Les organisations existantes de représentation des auteurs constatent aussi cette précarité grandissante, mais ne trouvent apparemment pas de solution pour changer les choses.

Qu'est-ce qui a distingué ces organisations lors de leurs entretiens avec la mission Racine ?

S.L.C. : Les représentants de la Ligue des auteurs professionnels, de la Charte des auteurs jeunesse et de la Guilde des scénaristes ou le Comité pluridisciplinaires des artistes-auteurs nous ont impressionnés par la qualité de leur préparation : ils sont arrivés avec une documentation abondante, exposant les problèmes et proposant des solutions. Les autres organisations sont bien conscientes des problèmes auxquels les auteurs sont confrontés, mais ils comptent d'abord sur le soutien des pouvoirs publics, notamment face aux grandes entreprises des nouvelles technologies, jugées responsables des plus graves menaces.

La contestation de la représentativité des organisations de gestion collective (OGC) vous semble-t-elle justifiée ?

S.L.C. : Les OGC ont un rôle évident dans la perception et la gestion des droits, mais ce ne sont peut-être pas les acteurs à interroger sur les questions sociales et professionnelles qui préoccupent les auteurs. Il faut savoir qu'elles catégorisent leurs membres en fonction du montant des droits qu'ils reçoivent, notamment à la SACD et la Sacem, où le nombre de voix dépend du volume des droits, et où les fonctions d'administrateur sont réservées aux auteurs justifiant d'un minimum de perception assez important. Ces critères de représentation ne sont pas neutres, alors que ces OGC sont représentées au Conseil supérieur de la propriété littéraire et artistique, que le ministre va consulter notamment à propos du contrat de commande. Dans un syndicat, tous les adhérents sont au même niveau.

Que pensez-vous de la revendication d'élections ?

S.L.C. : Il faut organiser des élections, c'est une nécessité, pour trancher cette question de la représentation des différentes organisations qui parlent au nom des auteurs, et des objectifs qu'elles défendent. Il est regrettable que le ministre ait annoncé qu'elles seraient organisées fin 2021 alors que des sujets importants seront débattus dans les prochaines semaines ou mois. Il serait possible de les préparer pour la fin de l'année en cours, en retenant sur la liste des électeurs les auteurs qui ont perçu au moins pendant une année au cours des quatre dernières écoulées la valeur de 900 SMIC horaires, ainsi que le préconise le rapport Racine.

# Des nouvelles du PEN International



## Communiqué du PEN America

# Iran Bans Print Media in Response to COVID-19

*PEN America says it's a move to narrow press freedom even further*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

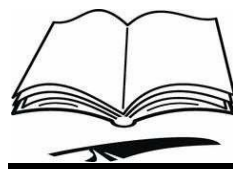
April 1, 2020

(New York, NY) – In response to an Iranian coronavirus task force's wholesale [ban on print media](#), Summer Lopez, PEN America's senior director of free expression programs, issued the following statement:

“This move looks worryingly like yet another example of an authoritarian regime using the the coronavirus outbreak as an excuse to constrain rights—in this case, narrowing restrictions on press freedom in Iran even further. Many countries have rightly recognized that news outlets are essential services, especially in a moment where access to information can mean the difference between life and death. The Iranian people deserve access to information, and journalists in Iran deserve the right to continue their vital work. Finding ways to ensure journalists' safety while reporting during the outbreak is critical, but possible; we call on the government of Iran to ensure those steps are taken and permit news outlets to operate. Press freedom must not be yet another casualty of the virus.”

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*PEN America stands at the intersection of literature and human rights to protect open expression in the United States and worldwide. We champion the freedom to write, recognizing the power of the word to transform the world. Our mission is to unite writers and their allies to celebrate creative expression and defend the liberties that make it possible. CONTACT : Stephen Fee, Director of Communications, [sfee@pen.org](mailto:sfee@pen.org), +1 202 309 8892*





## Communiqués du PEN International

# Turkey: 24 groups call on authorities to release those detained and at risk of COVID-19

Friday 17 April 2020 - 3:03pm

Ahmet Altan

**In the early hours of Tuesday 14 April, the Turkish Parliament passed a law which will lead to the release of up to 90,000 prisoners. However, it excludes scores of journalists, human rights defenders, politicians, lawyers and others arbitrarily detained pending trial or serving sentences following unfair trials under Turkey's overly broad antiterrorism laws which facilitate incarceration for exercise of free speech.**

**While we welcome any measures taken to alleviate overcrowding in Turkey's prisons, the new measures unjustifiably exclude tens of thousands who are imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of their rights. ARTICLE 19, Punto24 and the 22 undersigned organisations call on the Turkish authorities to take immediate steps to fulfill their human rights obligations by releasing all those arbitrarily detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression and help mitigate the threat caused by the Covid-19 public health pandemic**

The adoption of the law, which is part of the government's judicial reform strategy announced in 2019, was fast-tracked in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to alleviate overcrowding in Turkey's prisons. The [new law comes](#) into force as Turkey's Justice Ministry has announced the death of three prisoners from Covid-19 on 13 April. The new law does not apply to individuals in pre-trial detention and also excludes anyone convicted of terrorism related crimes, espionage or crimes against the intelligence services - laws which are frequently used to prosecute journalists, human rights defenders

and others. This means many thousands of individuals whose only crime is the exercise of their right to freedom of expression are effectively excluded from release and are at increased risk of contracting the disease in prison.

Among them are Ahmet Altan, 70, who is awaiting appeal after being sentenced to 10.5 years in prison for “aiding a terrorist organization without being its member”, on the basis of his expression of political views, his previous role as editor of Taraf newspaper, and alleged contacts. It also includes businessman Osman Kavala, who has been in pre-trial detention for over two and a half years, currently on the charge of “espionage” and Kurdish politician Selahattin Demirtas, who has been in prison since November 2016 and whose release has been repeatedly blocked despite a European Court decision ordering it. Journalists Barış Terkoğlu, Barış Pehlivan, Hülya Kılınç, Murat Ağirel, Ferhat Çelik and Aydın Keser, were remanded in prison in March, on charges under the Law on National Intelligence Agency, in connection with their reporting on the death of an intelligence officer in Libya.

Turkey is subject to the authority of both the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and the European Committee on the Prevention on Torture who respectively have issued calls to “reduce prison populations and other detention populations, wherever possible” and said concerted efforts by all relevant authorities to resort to alternatives to deprivation of liberty “ is imperative, in particular, in situations of overcrowding.”

We likewise urge the Turkish authorities to follow the advice of the World Health Organisation, which strongly recommends States give enhanced consideration to noncustodial measures at all stages of the administration of criminal justice, including at the pretrial, trial and sentencing as well as post-sentencing stages. It also urges priority be given to conditional release, particularly for older persons, ill people, and others (including pregnant women) with specific risks related to Covid-19. The WHO has made it clear that without taking urgent measures in prisons to reduce the spread of the virus, efforts to control the spread of Covid-19 in the community are also likely to fail.

The Turkish courts frequently justify pre-trial detention on the grounds of flight risk or tampering with evidence. Given the closure of borders due to the pandemic, it is difficult to see what justification there is for holding individuals in pre-trial detention for lengthy periods in what is now an extremely high risk situation.

To protect the human rights of prisoners, including their right to life and health, and to protect the health of the public at large, the Turkish authorities should now enact immediate measures to release all those arbitrarily detained, whether in pre-trial detention or after conviction, particularly given many are vulnerable to Covid-19 due to their age or underlying health conditions. We urge the authorities to move now to prevent a humanitarian disaster. Failure to release those detained and imprisoned in unfair trials and on spurious charges, which would help reduce the spread of a deadly disease in detention, would show further alarming disregard for human rights by the Turkish government.



# A Poetry Memorial for Daphne Caruana Galizia

Monday 14 October 2019 - 3:55pm

Update - 16 October 2019

*'It has been two years since Daphne Caruana Galizia was murdered outside her home. Days ago, a court in Valletta, a city in which a public memorial to Daphne keeps being torn down by the Maltese authorities, sat through defamation case hearings that continue posthumously against Daphne. One of these cases was by Prime Minister Joseph Muscat. I wish the Maltese authorities would display the same determination into pursuing the people who ordered the killing of a journalist. Daphne and her family deserve justice, not five years from now, not ten years from now. They deserve justice today.'* Margaret Atwood

Today marks two years since the brutal assassination of Malta's best-known investigative journalist and anti-corruption campaigner, [Daphne Caruana Galizia](#). Although three men have now been formally charged with her murder, a date for their trial has yet to be set while those who ordered her killing remain at large. A memorial for her in Valetta, has been repeatedly destroyed by the authorities. In response, PEN International has devised a poetry memorial as a tribute to her courage and her dedication to freedom of expression. You can read poems written to honour her legacy below.

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## Billiards in Malta: A mirroring memory of Daphne Caruana Galizia

1 Monday, October 16th, 2017, was a usual working day for Malta.

2 The weather was warm, 24°C, the Sun unloaded its light shipload.

3 The northeaster played billiards chasing little clouds over the blue altar.

4 At 3 PM an invisible billiard cue stick flicked a car from the road.

5 After the blast Peugeot 108 simply vanished from the asphalt.

6 A car crash? A slip down? Broken brakes? Who knows? That's Malta.

7 People froze in shining shelters, seagulls panicked squeaking their alt.

8 Nobody knew what happened. Everybody knew. The world came to a halt. 9 In Malta billiard players always disappear into the blue.

10 A young man came running from the neighbouring house. That's Matthew.

11 Tin projectiles dugged shallow, smouldering craters like in a sci-fi.

12 80 metres from the road Matthew found scattered remains of his mother

13 Daphne Caruana Galizia. She was a journalist. And that is why

12 80 meters from the road Matthew found scattered remains of his mother.

11 Tin projectiles digged shallow, smouldering craters like in a sci-fi.  
10 Three young men will always search for their mother: Andrew, Paul & Matthew.  
  
9 In Malta billiard players with their billi000ns always disappear into the blue.  
8 Nobody ever knows. Everybody knows. The world comes to a halt.  
7 People freeze in shining shelters, seagulls panick squeaking their alt.  
  
6 A car crash? A slip down? Broken brakes? Who knows? That's Malta.  
5 After the blast Peugeot 108 simply vanished from the asphalt.  
4 At 3 PM an invisible billi000n cue stick flicked a car from the road.  
  
3 The northeaster gained billi000ns chasing little zer000es over the blue altar.  
2           The weather was warm, 24°C, the Sun unloaded its light  
shipload. 1           Monday, October 16th, 2017, was a usual working  
day for Malta.

**Boris A. Novak**

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### **A laurel wreath for a dead journalist**

It was not love that planted the bomb,  
it was not infatuation that led to my  
pursuit. It was not love that forever  
changed me, taking me away from  
them, my children.

*It was a different kind of annihilation—*

Daphne of legend, naiad, nymph of blessed  
places, garnered for Apollo a laurel-wreath  
when she fled his pursuit.

*i.m Daphne Caruana Galizia, make me a place,*

wreath me in laurels for the words I gave to  
you, in rosemary for remembrance. Make a  
grove of laurels for me, cooling trees. Put  
them somewhere that is beyond his taking,  
beyond his touch.

A shaded place for remembering, bring flowers there.

**C. Murray**

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### **In Memory of Daphne Caruana Galizia**

A perfectly ordinary working day: Daphne turns a key and suddenly all her words become memorials.

It is a kind of black magic.

A government frightened of remembering turns a blind eye, whereby power turns into disgrace.  
Malta: this sun-laden, holiday-enticing island turns into a murderous place.

**Dennis Haskell**

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**Poem for a rose**

You are a broken rose  
which robbed of their  
thorns on black earth  
flowers in secret -  
invisible for the  
ignorant

you grabbed the bull by the  
horns he has lost his fur for  
the price of your life pulsing  
in a snake pit

your heart - still do

you live on in the memories of  
the people in her actions and  
dreams you did not go, Galizia  
you are where we are looking  
for you **Gedicht für eine Rose**

eine gebrochene Rose  
bist du die ihrer Dornen  
beraubt auf schwarzer  
Erde im verborgnen  
blüht - unsichtbar für die  
unwissenden

du hast den stier bei den hörnern  
gepackt er hat sein fell verloren um  
den preis deines lebens in einer

schlangengrube pulsiert dein herz -  
immer noch

lebst du weiter in den  
erinnerungen der menschen  
in ihren handlungen und  
träumen du bist nicht  
gegangen, Galizia du bist  
dort, wo wir dich suchen

### **Dirk-Uwe Becker**

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#### **Laurel**

Your work stands  
firm against the wind  
hereabouts

In far-off lands paper is  
made from your bark  
that your words be  
preserved in sacred texts

#### **Labhras**

Seasann do shaothar go  
daingean i gcoinne na  
gaoithe i gcóngar

I gcéin déantar páipear de  
do choirt go  
gcaomhnaítear do  
bhriathra i dtéacsanna  
diaga

#### **Celia de Fréine**

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#### **Das Schreiende Unrecht**

Daphne Caruana Galizia war dem Unrecht auf der Spur,  
hellhörig durch Fakten, so sehr man sich auch bemühte, sie  
zu verschleiern und zu zerreden, vor allem von Jenen, die  
für viele Andere zu sprechen hatten. Als deren mißlungene  
Argumentation in Vertraulichkeiten einmündete oder in  
massive Einschüchterungsversuche, hinterhältig, feig und

infam, haben unverändert korrupte Herrschaftsverhältnisse das Recht ins Beziehungslose hinausgestellt. Weil es unter solchen Bedingungen kein Sprechen mehr gibt, weil am Ende der Ausweg in die Vernunft versperrt -, jedes Vertrauen zerstört ist. Daphnes Sprache kam eine besondere Bedeutung zu, weil sie sich jenen widmete die schweigen oder nicht mehr reden können oder zum Schweigen verurteilt sind. Daphne achtete auf Bruchstücke der Sprache, auf den Zynismus des Unwiderruflichen, darauf, dass man sowohl durch Sprache als auch von der Faktizität der Tatsachen erstickt werden kann in einer verpfuschten Gesellschaft, darauf dass aus dem Sprechen nichts anderes geworden ist als das Grinsen darüber, dass dem Sprechenden nicht das Schicksal des zum Schweigen gebrachten widerfährt.

### **Wolfgang Mayer König**

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#### **Malta - Assassination Day**

Under a moon full-grown and  
white like a wild potato gone mad,

a man sits, half in darkness,  
alone and smoking on his  
veranda,

floor strewn with advertising,  
newspapers and brochures about  
temples and cities and five-star  
hotels. But grim is the news driven

by the machinery of death, the  
island lays bare its whitewashed  
tombs.

A single bomb blew a car almost  
over the mountains and left the  
tongue

that made life hell for Malta's mafia  
dead and charred. Like crows

the potato sacks took wing over hills  
closely planted with seed potatoes  
from

Het Bildt. Ai, watch your back,  
Jack, now night has fallen in  
Europe.

In the valley of death they torched the  
word the way they once slid books into  
the flames.

### **Eeltsje Hettinga**

*Translation: David Colmer*

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### **Bonehouse**

You may have taken my body,  
scattered me with your bomb  
for my son to find, part by  
part, but my body was only a  
bonehouse.

I was more than skin and  
sinew, more than blood and  
cells, more than brain and  
heart. I was questions and I  
was answers, I was truth and I  
was freedom.

Listen well, all  
you corrupt  
men:  
I was love.  
Listen  
again: I  
still am.

### **Nuala O'Connor**

---

### **How to Destroy a Memorial**

The yellow throated  
crocus will still speak out.

Wax will keep  
its vigil in the hive.

Into the ear of each wave the  
sea daffodil whispers your  
name.

The torn messages  
begin to hum -

the Gregal carries  
news on the wires of  
its breath.

The leaking ink  
stains each grain of  
sand

which strafe the  
face of Valetta

stick as grit in its eye,  
keep its throat raw.

**Nell Regan**

---

### **Voices under the Sun**

On the remote island of Malta  
Mediterranean is in its bloom, boiling inside  
Here it was, according to some - a lost city of Atlantis  
The lighthouse is torn and the horizon melts indivisible  
There is a vigil across from the courthouse in Valletta  
We will not yield until truth is told, voices are  
saying Here now the earth is rotten and numb  
Covering the roots of sinister crime.

**Tomica Bajsić**

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### **Archeology**

Under the sustained sadness  
Under the liquid glance of your four family men,  
Father and sons speaking to the cameras,  
Under the flowers, destroyed but replaced,  
On the field where your word  
Was set on fire, put to ashes,  
An outraged archeology is resting, maybe waiting,

Disquiet,  
While moist webs are becoming solid  
And echoes of anger  
Keep becoming stone, or just paper,  
Which never  
forgets, Just like  
sheer anger  
Should never become mere sorrow.

**Teresa Salema** (Portuguese PEN)

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### **À la mémoire de Daphne Caruana Galizia**

Pourquoi est-ce qu'on te  
tue parce qu'on t'a bien  
vu parce qu'on déteste  
l'humanité et le reste !

Daphne, ta vie était un grand sacrifice  
pour la découverte des crimes et des  
vices pour trouver la vérité et garder  
la justice !

Mais il faut lutter pour la liberté  
néanmoins il faut croire en fraternité !

**Vera Botterbusch**

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### **Daphne**

If I was a poet, Daphne, I'd write a line to  
guide you home, rewind that yarn – Ariadne's  
trick. Island-born like you, sick of cruelty and  
greed seeding blood-soaked stone, blackened  
bone.

I'd build walls of words to shelter you. I'd  
feed you figs, salted olives too; restore you to  
your desk that day – Crooks, everywhere you  
look. You'd Save, you'd stay. Your lines,  
straight and true,

cut right through lies, the ties that bind so  
many tongues, roll back the blinds from  
careless minds. We hear you, here. Let this



space, these awkward lines of mine,  
remember you.

**LM**

---

**Daphne - In Memoriam**

A first morning in Malta,  
Guided like a tourist past trinket shops  
Towards lunch, it was hardly a surprise  
To find that on a small island  
Everybody knew my business,  
Theirs, each other's.

Truth is always elusive and recollection tricky.  
Memory has to be massaged from the  
haze, Rescued from the fickleness of  
history, The arrogance of men.

When you shake hands, settle down  
For the opening of wine,  
How different it would have felt  
To have known you were meeting a martyr  
Soon to pay for questioning crime.

**Simon Mundy**

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**Malta: How free I was there**

As in a circle, the Bus Stops taken  
Hop-on, Hop-off – without guidance  
On all sides Water, fishing boats, colors  
Drinkable the ocean

The Grand Harbour market  
For smugglers of goods and thoughts  
I try my hand as a silver-plater of words  
With my bookish past

Churches and palaces  
Yachts and limousines  
A world straight out of a film

For the package tourist, who  
Leaves it on the surface

**Ralph Grüneberger**

*Translation: Ron Horwege*

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صرخة  
أحمد العجمي

في هذا الليل الباردِ

دعني أصرخُ،  
إن كانت صرختي  
ستوقظُ صبايحَ العدالة.

ال أمتك قوةً عضليةً، وال  
رصاصاً وال مخالف،  
ل كن صرختي  
تُدشّنُ الريحَ، والذين ليس لهم  
غيوم.

أحاً لم كثيرةً أثتلها الجمودُ لم  
يص زح أحدها، وال من  
أجلها،  
وصار الم طر يبتعدُ عن الثياب.  
على الصرخة أن ترحل من  
كتاب إلى نهر  
لنتجاوزَ العالمَ الخالين  
النوار،  
ثم ترتدُّ إلى صدري، لتنمو.

كُلُّ الظروفِ مهيأةٌ؛  
زاوية الميالن، ارتف اغ  
الفقر، ضخامة الفسا د،  
الض وء والموسيقى،  
فلتص رخ، داخلي، جميع  
الحجار قو الطيور.

Ahmed Alajmi

# Joint statement: surveillance technologies to fight pandemic must respect human rights

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global public health emergency that requires a coordinated and large-scale response by governments worldwide. However, States' efforts to contain the virus must not be used as a cover to usher in a new era of greatly expanded systems of invasive digital surveillance.

We, the undersigned organizations, urge governments to show leadership in tackling the pandemic in a way that ensures that the use of digital technologies to track and monitor individuals and populations is carried out strictly in line with human rights.

Technology can and should play an important role during this effort to save lives, such as to spread public health messages and increase access to health care. However, an increase in state digital surveillance powers, such as obtaining access to mobile phone location data, threatens privacy, freedom of expression and freedom of association, in ways that could violate rights and degrade trust in public authorities – undermining the effectiveness of any public health response. Such measures also pose a risk of discrimination and may disproportionately harm already marginalized communities.

These are extraordinary times, but human rights law still applies. Indeed, the human rights framework is designed to ensure that different rights can be carefully balanced to protect individuals and wider societies. States cannot simply disregard rights such as privacy and freedom of expression in the name of tackling a public health crisis. On the contrary, protecting human rights also promotes public health. Now more than ever, governments must rigorously ensure that any restrictions to these rights is in line with long-established human rights safeguards.

This crisis offers an opportunity to demonstrate our shared humanity. We can make extraordinary efforts to fight this pandemic that are consistent with human rights standards and the rule of law. The decisions that governments make now to confront the pandemic will shape what the world looks like in the future.

**We call on all governments** not to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with increased digital surveillance unless the following conditions are met:

1. Surveillance measures adopted to address the pandemic must be lawful, necessary and proportionate. They must be provided for by law and must be justified by legitimate public health objectives, as determined by the appropriate public health authorities, and be proportionate to those needs. Governments must be transparent about the measures they are taking so that they can be scrutinised and if appropriate later modified, retracted, or overturned. We cannot allow the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as an excuse for indiscriminate mass surveillance.
2. If governments expand monitoring and surveillance powers then such powers must be time bound, and only continue for as long as necessary to address the current

pandemic. We cannot allow the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as an excuse for indefinite surveillance.

3. States must ensure that increased collection, retention, and aggregation of personal data, including health data, is only used for the purposes of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data collected, retained, and aggregated to respond to the pandemic must be limited in scope, time-bound in relation to the pandemic and must not be used for commercial or any other purposes. We cannot allow the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as an excuse to gut individual's right to privacy.

4. Governments must take every effort to protect people's data, including ensuring sufficient security of any personal data collected and of any devices, applications, networks, or services involved in collection, transmission, processing, and storage. Any claims that data is anonymous must be based on evidence and supported with sufficient information regarding how it has been anonymised. We cannot allow attempts to respond to this pandemic to be used as justification for compromising people's digital safety.

5. Any use of digital surveillance technologies in responding to COVID-19, including big data and artificial intelligence systems, must address the risk that these tools will facilitate discrimination and other rights abuses against racial minorities, people living in poverty, and other marginalised populations, whose needs and lived realities may be obscured or misrepresented in large datasets. We cannot allow the COVID-19 pandemic to further increase the gap in the enjoyment of human rights between different groups in society.

6. If governments enter into data sharing agreements with other public or private sector entities, they must be based on law, and the existence of these agreements and information necessary to assess their impact on privacy and human rights must be publicly disclosed – in writing, with sunset clauses, public oversight and other safeguards by default. Businesses involved in efforts by governments to tackle COVID-19 must undertake due diligence to ensure they respect human rights, and ensure any intervention is firewalled from other business and commercial interests. We cannot allow the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as an excuse for keeping people in the dark about what information their governments are gathering and sharing with third parties.

7. Any response must incorporate accountability protections and safeguards against abuse. Increased surveillance efforts related to COVID-19 should not fall under the domain of security or intelligence agencies and must be subject to effective oversight by appropriate independent bodies. Further, individuals must be given the opportunity to know about and challenge any COVID-19 related measures to collect, aggregate, and retain, and use data. Individuals who have been subjected to surveillance must have access to effective remedies.

8. COVID-19 related responses that include data collection efforts should include means for free, active, and meaningful participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular experts in the public health sector and the most marginalised population groups.

[Versión en español]

# **Estados deben respetar los derechos humanos al emplear tecnologías de vigilancia digital para combatir la pandemia**

viernes 3 abril 2020 - 5:46am

2 de abril de 2020.- La pandemia de COVID-19 es una emergencia global de salud pública, que precisa de una respuesta coordinada y en gran escala de los gobiernos en todo el mundo. Sin embargo, las iniciativas de los Estados para contener el virus no deben servir para encubrir el inicio de una nueva era marcada por una enorme expansión de los sistemas de vigilancia digital invasiva.

Las organizaciones abajo firmantes instamos a los gobiernos a dar muestra de liderazgo en la gestión de la pandemia garantizando que el empleo de tecnologías digitales para rastrear y monitorear a personas y poblaciones respeta plenamente los derechos humanos.

La tecnología puede y debe desempeñar importantes funciones durante este esfuerzo que se está realizando para salvar vidas, como difundir mensajes de salud pública y aumentar el acceso a los servicios de salud. No obstante, el aumento de los poderes de vigilancia digital de los Estados –como tener acceso a los datos de localización de los teléfonos móviles– amenaza la privacidad, la libertad de expresión y la libertad de asociación de una manera que podría violar derechos y reducir la confianza en las autoridades públicas, con el consiguiente menoscabo de la eficacia de las repuestas de salud pública. Tales medidas entrañan también un riesgo de discriminación y pueden perjudicar de manera desproporcionada a comunidades ya marginadas.

Vivimos tiempos extraordinarios, pero el derecho de los derechos humanos sigue siendo aplicable. De hecho, el marco de los derechos humanos tiene por objeto garantizar un cuidadoso equilibrio de los distintos derechos para proteger a las personas y las sociedades en general. Los Estados no pueden desatender sin más derechos como la privacidad y la libertad de expresión con el pretexto de gestionar una crisis de salud pública. Al contrario, la protección de los derechos humanos también promueve la salud pública. Ahora más que nunca, los gobiernos deben garantizar estrictamente que toda restricción de estos derechos se ajusta a las salvaguardias de los derechos humanos ya establecidas.

Esta crisis nos brinda la oportunidad de demostrar la humanidad que compartimos. Para combatir esta pandemia, podemos hacer esfuerzos extraordinarios que sean compatibles con las normas de derechos humanos y el Estado de derecho. Las decisiones que los gobiernos tomen ahora para afrontar la pandemia determinarán cómo será el mundo en el futuro.

Pedimos a todos los gobiernos que no respondan a la pandemia de COVID-19 incrementando la vigilancia digital si no se cumplen las condiciones siguientes:

1. Las medidas de vigilancia adoptadas para abordar la pandemia deben ser legales, necesarias y proporcionadas. Han de estar previstas por la ley y justificadas por objetivos legítimos de salud pública, determinados por las autoridades de salud pública competentes, y ser proporcionadas a esas necesidades. Los gobiernos deben ser transparentes con respecto a las medidas que tomen, para que puedan ser analizadas y modificadas, retiradas o anuladas posteriormente, si procede. No podemos dejar que la pandemia de COVID-19 sirva de excusa para ejercer vigilancia masiva indiscriminada.

2. Si los gobiernos amplían los poderes de seguimiento y vigilancia, tales poderes han de ser de duración limitada y prolongarse sólo durante el tiempo necesario para abordar la pandemia actual. No podemos dejar que la pandemia de COVID-19 sirva de excusa para ejercer vigilancia indefinidamente.

3. Los Estados deben garantizar que el aumento de la recopilación, conservación y agregación de datos personales, incluidos los relativos a la salud, tiene como único fin responder a la pandemia de COVID-19. Los datos recopilados, conservados y agregados para responder a la pandemia deben tener un alcance y duración limitados en función de la pandemia y no utilizarse con fines comerciales ni de otra índole. No podemos dejar que la pandemia de COVID-19 sirva de excusa para menoscabar el derecho personal a la privacidad.

4. Los gobiernos deben hacer todo lo posible para proteger los datos personales, lo que incluye garantizar la debida seguridad de los datos recopilados y de los dispositivos, aplicaciones, redes o servicios utilizados en su recopilación, transmisión, tratamiento y almacenamiento. Cuando se afirme que los datos son anónimos, ha de poder demostrarse y respaldarse con información suficiente sobre cómo se han anonimizado. No podemos dejar que los intentos de responder a esta pandemia sirvan de justificación para poner en riesgo la seguridad digital de las personas.

5. Todo uso de tecnologías de vigilancia digital en la respuesta a la COVID-19, incluidos los sistemas de inteligencia de datos y artificial, debe tener en cuenta el riesgo de que tales herramientas faciliten la discriminación y otros abusos contra los derechos de las minorías raciales, las personas que viven en la pobreza y las poblaciones marginadas, cuyas necesidades y realidades de vida pueden quedar ocultas o mal representadas en los macroconjuntos de datos. No podemos dejar que la pandemia de COVID-19 aumente aún más las diferencias existentes en el disfrute de los derechos humanos entre distintos grupos de la sociedad.

6. Si los gobiernos firman acuerdos para compartir datos con otras entidades públicas o del sector privado, deben hacerlo basándose en la ley, y la existencia de tales acuerdos, así como la información necesaria para evaluar su impacto en la privacidad y los derechos humanos, debe revelarse públicamente, por escrito, con las cláusulas de suspensión y con supervisión pública y otras salvaguardias por defecto. Las empresas participantes en las iniciativas de los gobiernos frente a la COVID-19 deben ejercer la diligencia debida para garantizar que respetan los derechos humanos y que toda intervención está desligada de otros intereses empresariales y comerciales. No podemos

dejar que la pandemia de COVID-19 sirva de excusa para ocultar a la sociedad qué información recopila y comparte con terceros su gobierno.

7. Toda respuesta debe incorporar mecanismos de rendición de cuentas y salvaguardias contra el uso indebido. El aumento de las medidas de vigilancia ante la COVID-19 no debe ser competencia de los organismos de seguridad o inteligencia, y tiene que estar sujeto a la supervisión efectiva de órganos independientes adecuados. Además, se debe ofrecer a las personas la oportunidad de conocer e impugnar toda medida que se tome en relación con la COVID-19 para recopilar, agregar, conservar y emplear datos. Las personas que hayan sido sometidas a vigilancia han de tener acceso a medios efectivos para interponer recursos.

8. Las respuestas a la COVID-19 que contengan medidas de recopilación de datos han de incluir medios de participación libre, activa y significativa de las partes interesadas pertinentes, en particular de especialistas del sector de la salud pública y de los grupos de población más marginados.

## **Bahrain: free imprisoned rights defenders and activists facing COVID-19 threat**

Monday 6 April 2020 - 12:41pm

Amid the global threat posed by COVID-19, Bahraini authorities should release human rights defenders, opposition activists, journalists and all others imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and association, a coalition of 20 rights groups said today.

On March 17, 2020, Bahrain [completed](#) the release of 1,486 prisoners, 901 of whom received royal pardons on “humanitarian grounds.” The remaining 585 were given non-custodial sentences. While this is a positive step, the releases so far have excluded opposition leaders, activists, journalists and human rights defenders – many of whom are older and/or suffer from underlying medical conditions. Such prisoners are at high risk of serious illness if they contract COVID-19, and thus ought to be prioritised for release.

*"While we welcome this first step by the Bahraini authorities, we must not forget those still in jail - including human rights defenders, journalists and activists. These prisoners now face an unprecedented health risk. The government of Bahrain must take measures to ensure access to adequate medical care for those still imprisoned and immediately free those jailed solely for exercising their right to free expression,"* said Aaliya Ahmed, International Programmes Director at PEN International.

Opposition leaders imprisoned for their roles in the 2011 protest movement remain behind bars. These include **Hassan Mushaima**, the head of the unlicensed opposition group Al-Haq; **Abdulwahab Hussain**, an opposition leader; **Abdulhadi Al Khawaja**, a

prominent human rights defender; and **Dr Abdel-Jalil al-Singace**, the spokesman for Al-Haq.

*“Bahrain’s significant release of prisoners is certainly a welcome relief as concerns around the spread of COVID-19 continue to rise. Authorities must now speedily release those who never should have been in jail in the first place, namely all prisoners of conscience who remain detained solely for exercising their right to peaceful expression,”* said Lynn Maalouf, Amnesty International’s Middle East director of research. *“We also urge the authorities to step up measures to ensure full respect for the human rights of all those deprived of their liberty.”*

Other prominent opposition figures, including **Sheikh Ali Salman**, secretary general of the dissolved Al-Wefaq National Islamic Society (Al-Wefaq), also remain imprisoned. **Sayed Nizar Alwadaei**, who was deemed [arbitrarily detained](#) by the United Nations in “reprisal” for the activism of his brother-in-law, the exiled activist Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei; and human rights defenders **Nabeel Rajab** and **Naji Fateel**, have not been released either. Amnesty International considers them to be prisoners of conscience who should be released immediately and unconditionally.

The Bahrain Center for Human Rights has documented that a total of 394 detainees of the 1,486 released were imprisoned on political charges. According to Salam for Democracy and Human Rights, another Bahraini nongovernmental group, 57 of the 901 prisoners who received a royal pardon were imprisoned for their political activities, while the rest were given non-custodial sentences. Since the Bahraini government has not made available any information on the charges for which those ordered released had been convicted the exact figures cannot be verified. However, it is clear that people imprisoned for nonviolent political activity are in the minority of those released.

Scores of prisoners convicted following unfair trials under Bahrain’s overly broad counterterrorism law have been overlooked and denied early release or alternative penalties, even though other inmates serving considerably longer sentences were freed. This includes Zakiya Al Barboori and Ali Al Hajee, according to the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD).

Conditions in Bahrain’s overcrowded prisons compound the risk of COVID-19 spreading. The lack of adequate sanitation led to a scabies outbreak in Jau Prison – Bahrain’s largest prison – and [Dry Dock Detention Center](#) in December 2019 and January 2020. Almost half of the Dry Dock Detention Center’s prison population was infected. In 2016 a governmental Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission [found](#) buildings at Jau Prison to suffer from “bad hygiene,” “insect infestation” and “broken toilets.”

Furthermore, Amnesty International, [Human Rights Watch](#), and the [United Nations](#) have expressed their concern over the authorities’ persistent [failure to provide adequate medical care in Bahrain’s prisons](#). This has endangered the health of some unjustly imprisoned persons with chronic medical conditions, such as Hassan Mushaima and Dr Abdel-Jalil alSingace, who may now be at heightened risk of contracting COVID-19.



Hassan Mushaima, 72, has diabetes, gout, heart and prostate problems, and is also in remission for cancer. Prison authorities have routinely [failed](#) to take him to appointments due to his [refusal](#) to submit to wearing humiliating shackles during transfers to his appointments. International [human rights mechanisms](#) have said that the use of restraints on elderly or infirm prisoners who do not pose an escape risk can constitute ill-treatment.

Dr Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, 57, has post-polio syndrome and uses a wheelchair. Prison authorities have also refused to transport him to his medical appointments due to his refusal to wear shackles.

*“As the world faces the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, it is more important than ever that the international community work together to contain its spread and ensure that the health and rights of the vulnerable are protected,”* said Husain Abdullah, executive director at ADHRB. *“Bahrain’s allies, in particular the UK and US, should explicitly call on Bahrain to secure the release of all those solely imprisoned for their peaceful opposition to the government.”*

States have an obligation to ensure medical care for all those in their custody at least equivalent to that available to the general population and must not deny or limit detainees equal access to preventive, curative or palliative health care. Given that conditions in detention centers pose a heightened public health risk to the spread of COVID-19, and the persistent failure to provide an adequate level of care to those in their custody, there are grave concerns about whether prison authorities could effectively control the spread of COVID-19 and care for prisoners if there is an outbreak inside Bahrain’s prisons.

The Bahraini authorities should seize the opportunity to immediately and unconditionally release everyone imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their rights to free expression, including Hassan Mushaima, Dr Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, Abdulahdi Al-Khawaja, Abdulwahab Hussain, Nabeel Rajab, Naji Fateel, and Sheikh Ali Salman. The convictions of those imprisoned following unfair trials – including Sayed Nizar Alwadaei – should be quashed, or at the very least they should be released pending fair re-trial.

The risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to those in detention should be a strong factor weighing toward the reduction of the prison population through the release of pre-trial detainees, particularly given the poor, unsanitary conditions in Bahrain’s prisons and the inadequate provision of medical care. In addition, prisoners who are especially vulnerable to COVID-19, such as those with underlying medical conditions and the elderly, should be considered for early release, parole, or alternative non-custodial measures as a means to further reduce the prison population and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In any event, the authorities should ensure that anyone who remains in custody has access to disease prevention and treatment services, including ensuring physical distancing of prisoners at all times, including in housing and eating and social areas. Prison authorities should screen all guards to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 into prisons and provide appropriate information on hygiene and supplies and ensure that all areas accessible to prisoners, prison staff, and visitors are disinfected regularly. They should develop plans for housing people exposed to or infected with the virus in quarantine or isolation and ensure that necessary medical care is available.

*“Bahrain’s first wave of prison releases was positive, but insufficient,” said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “The authorities should further reduce the prison population by releasing those who are imprisoned solely for their political beliefs or for exercising their right to free speech and peaceful assembly. Meanwhile, the authorities should ramp up efforts to ensure that the remaining prison population has access to the medical care, is protected from transmission and is provided the information that they need to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.”*

# **Sri Lanka: Drop investigation into awardwinning writer Shakthika Sathkumara**

Update #2 to RAN 09/12

PEN International is deeply concerned by the ongoing legal proceedings against award-winning writer, Shakthika Sathkumara, accused of inciting religious hatred and violating international human rights Law under Section 3(1) of Sri Lanka's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Act No. 56 of 2007(ICCPR Act 2007) and Article 291B of the Penal Code. Sathkumara is still awaiting the decision of the Attorney General as to whether he will formally be charged. His last court hearing took place on 10 December 2019. Sathkumara's next hearing before a Magistrate is scheduled for 19 May 2020. If formally charged and convicted, Sathkumara could face up to 10 years in prison. On 2 December 2019, Sathkumara was reappointed to his position as development officer at the Maspotha Divisional Secretariat, but warned that he may face a disciplinary inquiry. PEN International believes that Shakthika Sathkumara is being targeted solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and calls for the investigation against him to be dropped.

**TAKE ACTION!**

**Please send appeals :**

- Welcoming the news that Sathkumara has been reappointed as a development officer at the Maspotha Divisional Secretariat, while requesting that the administration does not subject him to a disciplinary inquiry;
- Urging the authorities to drop the investigation into award-winning novelist Shakthika Sathkumara immediately and unconditionally;
  - Calling on the authorities to take steps to safeguard freedom of expression in line with international standards and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Sri Lanka is a State Party.

**Send appeals to:**

President

Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa  
Presidential Secretariat  
Galle Face,  
Colombo 1,  
Sri Lanka  
Fax :- +94 112 34 0340  
Email: [ps@presidentsoffice.lk](mailto:ps@presidentsoffice.lk)

Prime Minister

Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa  
Prime Minister's Office No: 58, Sir Ernest De Silva Mawatha, Colombo 07 Sri Lanka

Fax: +94 112 575310 / +94 112 574143

Email: [info@pmoffice.gov.lk](mailto:info@pmoffice.gov.lk)

#### Attorney General

Mr. Dappula de Livera

Fax: +94 112 436421

Email: [administration@attorneygeneral.gov.lk](mailto:administration@attorneygeneral.gov.lk)

#### Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

Dr. Deepika Udagama - Chairperson

Fax: +94 112 505591

Email: [chair.sechrsl@gmail.com](mailto:chair.sechrsl@gmail.com)

Send copies to the Embassy of Sri Lanka in your own country. Embassy addresses may be found here: <https://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-of/srilanka>.

Please reach out to your Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic representatives in Sri Lanka, calling on them to raise Shakthika Sathkumara's case in bilateral fora.

*Please inform PEN International of any action you take and of any responses you receive.*

**\*\*\*\* Please contact us if you are considering taking action after 19 May 2020 \*\*\*\***

#### **Publicity**

PEN members are encouraged to:

- Publish articles and opinion pieces in your national or local press highlighting the case of Shakthika Sathkumara and freedom of expression in Sri Lanka;
- Share information about Shakthika Sathkumara and your campaigning activities via social media;
- Promote Shakthika Sathkumara's writings (an English translation of his short story 'Ardha' is available here: <http://www.jdslanka.org/index.php/analysis-reviews/poetry-a-prose/903shakthika-sathkumara-shortstory-ardha>).

*Please keep PEN International informed of your activities.*

#### **Solidarity**

Solidarity is a key component of our campaign. Please send messages to: Emma Wadsworth-Jones [emma.wadsworth-jones@pen-international.org](mailto:emma.wadsworth-jones@pen-international.org)

Please do not use political symbols or send political content.

#### **Background**

Writer Shakthika Sathkumara is the author of seven short story collections, four poetry anthologies, a novel and at least 17 non-fiction books on literary theory, theatre and Buddhism, in addition to being a regular contributor to several literary supplements of various Sinhala-

language newspapers. He has earned recognition at both provincial and national levels for his short stories and poetry anthologies.

On 1 April 2019, Sathkumara was arrested on suspicion that he had committed offences under Section 291B of the Penal Code and Article 3(1) of Sri Lanka's ICCPR Act (2007), in connection with a short story that he had published on his Facebook page. The short story, 'Ardha' ('[Half](#)'), due to be published as part of a collection later this year, has provoked hostility from Buddhist groups in Sri Lanka. The groups [allege that the story is derogatory and defamatory](#) to Buddhism owing to its [indirect references](#) to homosexuality within the Buddhist clergy and also due to a different rendering, told by the characters of the short story, of the legendary story of "Siddhartha" in Buddhist literature. Sathkumara maintains that he did not intend to insult Buddhism nor wound the feelings of any religious community in writing his short story, which is written in a post-modernist style.

Article 291 B of the Sri Lankan Penal Code [states](#) that '[w]hoever with the deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class of persons, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, insults or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both,' while Article 3(1) Sri Lanka's ICCPR Act (2007) states that 'no person shall propagate war or advocate national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence' and makes any such crime a non-bailable offence which is punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

While freedom of expression may be limited for reasons of respect of the rights or reputations of others or for the protection of national security or of public order or of public health or morals, PEN [holds](#) that these limitations cannot legitimately be imposed on the expression of ideas about religion.

While PEN stands against the incitement of violence or hatreds, having reviewed the content of Sathkumara's story, PEN does not believe that the story constitutes incitement to violence.

At a hearing held on 25 June 2019, the police informed the court that their investigation had been concluded and the case referred to the Attorney General to render a decision as to whether to file charges against Sathkumara. At its subsequent hearing on 9 July 2019, police appearing before the Polgahawela Magistrate Court informed the court that they had not yet been informed of the Attorney General's decision. Sathkumara was granted bail on 5 August 2019 by the Kurunegala High Court and was released from prison on 8 August 2019, after bail was duly furnished at Polgahawela Magistrate Court. Sathkumara is required to report to Polgahawela police on the second and fourth Sunday of every month.

On 2 December 2019, after eight months of being placed on administrative leave, Sathkumara was reappointed to his position as a development officer at the Maspotha Divisional Secretariat on the condition that he may face a disciplinary inquiry in connection to his writing of 'Ardha'. Such a warning comes despite the fact that regulations prohibit the administrative authorities from carrying out a disciplinary inquiry into a non-work related matter, according to his legal team. He is yet to be reimbursed for his loss of earnings incurred during his compulsory leave.

According to Sathkumara's legal team, at a hearing held at the Polgahawela Magistrate Court on 10 December 2019, the police informed the court that they had not yet received instructions

from the Attorney General as to whether formal charges will be filed. The case was adjourned until 19 May 2020.

In a disappointing turn, the hearing of arguments of Sathkumara's fundamental rights case – which was filed before the Supreme Court by his lawyers on 29 April 2019 in order to challenge the constitutional validity of his arrest, claiming a breach of his right to freedom of expression and freedom from arbitrary arrest – was postponed until 28 July 2020.

Shakthika Sathkumara's award-winning publications include the short story collections *Fourth Generation* (2006), *Black Dragon* (2010), *Cactus Thorns* (2012), *Prosecutor's Conscience* (2015), *Sand* (2016), and poetry collections including *Shot in the Heart* (2009), *Darkness* (2011), and *Skylless Moon* (2012). Most recently, he has published *I Drop a Feather* (2016), *Radiant Woman* (2017), coauthored with Asiri Munasinghe, and *Nests* (2018).

*For more information, please contact Emma Wadsworth-Jones, Asia Programme Coordinator, at PEN*

*International, Koops Mill Mews, Unit A, 162-164 Abbey St, London, SE1 2AN, Tel. + 44 (0) 20 7405 0338, email: [emma.wadsworth-jones@pen-international.org](mailto:emma.wadsworth-jones@pen-international.org)*

## **México: PEN condena el asesinato de la periodista María Elena Ferral**

martes 31 marzo 2020 - 10:10pm

El asesinato de la periodista María Elena Ferral evidencia, una vez más, la falta de protección a periodistas y confirma que México es uno de los países más peligrosos para ejercer el periodismo, declaran PEN Internacional y el Centro PEN San Miguel de Allende hoy, y hacen un llamado urgente al gobierno mexicano para investigar la muerte de la reportera en relación con su trabajo.

El 30 de marzo de 2020, en la ciudad de Papantla, Veracruz, la periodista María Elena Ferral recibió al menos [tres impactos de bala](#), según la Comisión Estatal para la Atención y Protección a Periodistas. Tras el ataque, la reportera fue internada de emergencia a un hospital y unas horas después murió.

María Elena Ferral trabajó más de dos décadas como corresponsal. Escribía para el [Diario de Xalapa](#) y el [Heraldo de Coahuila](#), fue directora del diario [Quinto Poder](#) y recibió el Premio Nacional de Periodismo. En 2016, 2017 y 2018, Ferral denunció amenazas en su contra por parte de Camerino Basilio Picaso Pérez, ex Alcalde de Coyutla y ex diputado local. Dichas [amenazas fueron denunciadas](#) ante la Fiscalía Especializada en Delitos contra la Libertad de Expresión (FEADLE), y dejó un mensaje a un colega en caso de ser asesinada, donde pide, entre otras cosas, que se hagan [públicos siete correos electrónicos](#).

“La muerte de la periodista María Elena Ferral simboliza la desprotección de la libertad de información y de expresión en México. Cada día más periodistas y escritoras mujeres se enfrentan a distintas y crueles formas de violencia, que van desde un asesinato hasta intimidaciones o campañas de desprestigio”, dijo Jennifer Clement, Presidente de PEN Internacional.

Desde 2000 a la fecha se han registrado al menos [27 homicidios](#) a periodistas en Veracruz, el estado con mayor número de asesinatos a comunicadores en relación con su labor informativa. A

estas estadísticas se suman los ataques a la periodista Mireya Ulloa Valencia, directora editorial del periódico *La Opinión de Poza Rica*, quien el pasado 11 de marzo de 2020, [fue apuñalada afuera de su casa](#), en el mismo estado.

La [Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos](#) (CIDH), a través de estudios relacionados con los ataques en contra de mujeres periodistas, asegura que la violencia puede manifestarse de distintas formas, desde el asesinato, la violencia sexual (incluido el acoso sexual), la intimidación, el abuso de poder, hasta amenazas basadas en el género.

En el [Manifiesto de las Mujeres de PEN Internacional](#), se afirma: “PEN cree que la violencia en contra de la mujer, en todas sus formas, presente tanto en los muros de un hogar o en la esfera pública, crea peligrosas formas de censura”.

PEN Internacional y PEN San Miguel de Allende hacen un llamado urgente a las autoridades federales y estatales a investigar el asesinato de María Elena Ferral, y exige al Estado mexicano a proteger con medidas efectivas a sus periodistas y romper el ciclo de impunidad que permea en las agresiones a la libertad de expresión.

## **Joint statement: why are not engaging with the G20**

Friday 24 January 2020 - 9:36am Update - 24 March 2020

More than 220 civil society organisations from around the world have voiced their concerns over the G20 civil society engagement process hosted by and in Saudi Arabia in 2020. The organisations have pledged not to participate in this year's process, known as the Civil 20 or 'C20', the dedicated stream of meetings for civil society within the G20.

### **WHY WE ARE NOT ENGAGING WITH THE G20'S CIVIL SOCIETY PROCESS IN 2020**

The annual G20 summit often seems like a talking shop for the world's most powerful governments. The leaders of 19 of the largest national economies plus the European Union get together, shake hands in front of the cameras, and make vague agreements, many of which they don't implement. The summits draw the attention of the world's media, and – frequently – protesters from around the world who want to hold those governments to account.

Less well known is the extensive cycle of preparatory meetings leading up to the G20 leaders' summit.

Despite the many limitations and challenges of the process, for many voices from outside government – especially trade unions, rights groups and civil society – these are rare opportunities to make policy recommendations directly to national authorities and to influence the global agenda on issues that affect billions of people. For the last few years, there has even been a dedicated stream of meetings for civil society within the G20, known as the Civil 20 (C20).

In 2020, however, we as civil society organizations will be keeping our distance from the official C20 process, which will be hosted by and in Saudi Arabia.

G20 host Saudi Arabia has tried to promote an image of itself as a modern country attractive for foreign investors. The government has recruited expensive Western PR advisors and spent millions of dollars to polish its image and suppress criticism from international media. Meanwhile, at home the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regularly arrests and prosecutes human rights defenders, censors free speech, limits free movement, and tortures and mistreats detained journalists and activists. Vaguely worded counter-terror laws are used to silence government critics, including through the imposition of the death penalty. In October 2018, the world was shocked by the brutal murder of journalist and dissident Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. Women face systematic discrimination in law and practice. In addition, women human rights defenders who dare defend the rights of women are subjected to judicial persecution, arbitrary arrests and detention.

Instead of real reform, the Saudi government has been trying to whitewash its dire human rights record by holding major international events in the country. This includes the G20 and – through a government-authorized NGO – the C20. As leading civil society organisations present in most countries around the world (but notably not Saudi Arabia), we cannot participate in a process that seeks to give international legitimacy to a state that provides virtually no space for civil society, and where independent civil society voices are not tolerated.

In June 2019, the C20 established a set of principles, including a basic structure and operating mechanisms, to ensure its sustainability and effectiveness. The C20 principles emphasize



inclusion of a variety of civil society actors, from local to global; transparency of decision-making; freedom and independence from undue influence by any non-civil society actors; inclusiveness and diversity; and the guiding values of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment. Most of these principles will be absent in 2020, and more alarmingly we are already seeing the Saudi G20 presidency undermining these principles.

Virtually no domestic civil society actors will be able to participate in the upcoming C20 in Saudi Arabia, other than a token number of organisations working on issues deemed inoffensive by the Saudi government, since the Saudi authorities do not allow the existence of political parties, trade unions or independent human rights groups. Most progressive civil society activists are on trial or serving long prison sentences for speaking up, or have been forced into exile in order to avoid prison or worse. Returning to the country is not an option, as it will put them at risk. Without these independent and critical voices in the room, the credibility of the C20 is severely compromised.

Foreign and international civil society actors would also face significant challenges in freely participating in a Saudi-organised C20 event.

Existing laws and policies in Saudi Arabia not only directly affect the rights to freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly, but also create a chilling effect that acts to silence certain categories of activists who, if they were to speak out, would be jeopardizing their own safety. Moreover, in November 2019, Saudi Arabia's state security agency categorised feminism and homosexuality as crimes. While the announcement was rectified, Saudi Arabia's leading women human rights defenders are still behind bars and prosecuted for their human rights work. These laws and practices contradict C20 principles on diversity, gender equality and the empowerment of women, and they would stifle freedom of expression in discussions on women's rights, sexual and reproductive rights, and LGBTI rights.

This is compounded by a serious lack of press freedom in Saudi Arabia. Strict media controls, censorship and surveillance of social media, mean any discussions held at a Saudi-led C20 would never reach the wider Saudi population beyond a state-sanctioned narrative. Even if any such discussions were possible, without free media all meaningful discussions at the C20 would benefit only a limited audience. This is inconsistent with the C20's guiding principles of inclusiveness, openness, transparency and participation.

Previous G20 summits have seen protests by activists from the host state and elsewhere. Freedom of peaceful assembly is a right, but in a country where all gatherings, including peaceful demonstrations, are prohibited, there is no possibility that this fundamental right will be respected.

The Saudi-led C20 process is lacking in many respects, most notably in guaranteeing the C20's fundamental principles. Even this early in the 2020 C20 process we have observed a marked lack of transparency from the C20 hosts. The appointment of the Chairs of working groups and various committees was opaque and non-consultative, while arbitrary decisions have excluded experienced international groups. The C20 process led by the King Khalid Foundation, which is connected to the Saudi Royal Family, cannot be considered as transparent, inclusive and participatory, as required by the C20 Principles.

At a time when the world is facing a wide range of challenges, independent voices are needed more than ever. A state that closes civic space until it is virtually non-existent cannot be trusted to

guarantee the basic conditions for international civil society to exchange ideas and collaborate freely on any issue, let alone those issues it deems sensitive or offensive.

While we will not participate in the C20 this year, we commit to work together to make sure those voices are heard in 2020.

SIGNED

Amnesty International

CIVICUS

PEN International

Transparency International

### **Joint statement: NGOs call for cultural rights defenders to be protected**

Monday 9 March 2020 - 2:39pm

On March 4, 2020, Elizabeth O'Casey from Humanists International issued a joint oral statement on behalf of 12 civil society organisations in support of the UN Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights, Karima Bennounes's, new report on Cultural Rights Defenders.

Thank you, President.

The 75th anniversary of the United Nations and the beginning of the SDG Decade of Action is a unique opportunity to reiterate the importance of Cultural Rights Defenders and recognize their work as being in the same category as that of other human rights defenders.

On behalf of 12 civil society organisations, it is an honour to be present at the Human Rights Council to express support for the work of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights and commend her most recent report on Cultural Rights Defenders.

Cultural rights defenders (or CRDs) are human rights defenders who fight for the respect, protection, and fulfilment of cultural rights. Their work is often used to defend human rights more broadly. According to data from Front Line Defenders, CRDs defended more than 25 other human rights, including those of indigenous peoples, minorities, refugees and migrants, women and LGBTIQI persons, and more. They are thus critical for making progress on the SDGs and vice versa.

President, CRDs are critical to a free and open society, but often face threats from both state and non-state actors for their work. However, CRDs are often ignored as a subcategory of human

rights defenders and receive insufficient attention, support, and protection. The present report does not create a new category but rather calls for a more comprehensive approach to implementing the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Therefore, we encourage the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights to continue to work for the recognition and protection of cultural rights defenders and call upon member states to fully implement the Special Rapporteur's recommendations.

Thank you for your attention.

Signed,

**Egypt: arrest of author and activists disregards health and rights**

Wednesday 18 March 2020 - 9:16pm

Hanan Al Shaykh (left) and Ahdaf Soueif (right) at PalFest

Update - 20 March 2020

Ahdaf Soueif and the activists named below have been released, [according to](#) Soueif's verified Twitter feed.

**Arabic version follows.**

[الترجمة العربية أدناه](#)

Egypt's detention and arrest of several activists - including prominent Egyptian author Ahdaf Soueif demonstrates that the Egyptian government is more concerned with its reputation than the rights of its citizens, including their freedom of expression and right to information, PEN International said today in a joint statement alongside PEN America and English PEN. Soueif and several others were arrested during a protest calling for the release of detainees in order to curb the spread of coronavirus in Egyptian prisons.

On March 18, 2020, Ahdaf Soueif protested in front of the Cabinet of Egypt, alongside academic Rabab al-Mahdi, Soueif's sister and academic Leila Soueif, and her niece, activist Mona Soueif. Mona Soueif live streamed the protest on Facebook, recording a confrontation with police officers who reportedly asked them to stop and "discuss the matter" at a police station. Their phones were then apparently confiscated and turned off. According to human rights lawyer Khaled Ali, the group was detained at Qasr el-Nil police station in central Cairo. Later, according to one family member, the four were transferred out of the station in a police vehicle, and are now facing charges of illegal assembly, unlawful protest, and blocking traffic.

*"The arrest of Ahdaf Soueif and her family is an egregious attack on free expression and shows the Egyptian government's reflexive response to the coronavirus pandemic is to silence dissident voices to protect the state's national image, disregarding both public health and fundamental rights," said Karin Deutsch Karlekar, director of Free Expression at Risk Programs at PEN America. "Ahdaf Soueif and her family have every right to protest government policies that put*

countless individuals at risk. Cairo authorities should release these activists, immediately. While the world focuses on the spread of COVID-19, Egypt's government is bullying foreign reporters and arresting human rights defenders who protest. Clearly, they are hoping their thuggish behaviour will go unnoticed during this fearful time; it hasn't. We call on the international community to push back against Egypt's efforts to suppress freedom of expression under the cover of the coronavirus threat."

Prison visits in Egypt have been suspended for ten days in response to the pandemic, prompting worry from families of detainees. Soueif's own nephew, blogger and activist Alaa Abdel-Fattah, who previously served six years in prison for violating Egypt's protest law, has been detained since September.

Freedom of expression in Egypt has deteriorated dramatically over the past seven years under President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's rule. Since the coronavirus outbreak, the right to protest and press freedom are especially at risk. On Monday, Egypt revoked the license of a correspondent for The Guardian and threatened to revoke the paper's permit to operate in the country, after the outlet published a report suggesting that the number of cases in Egypt is higher than reported. The government also released a statement accusing TheNew York Times's Cairo bureau chief Declan Walsh of "professional violations," following tweets in which he implied that the reported number of COVID-19 cases in Egypt is an underestimate.

"Egypt's government should rise to the role it is expected to play as a government and immediately release Ahdaf Soueif and others, who were peacefully calling for the release of prisoners in jail, to prevent their exposure to #coronavirus. Jailing writers who speak truth to power is an old authoritarian trick; Egypt must walk back from that path," said Salil Tripathi, chair of PEN International's Writers in Prison Committee.

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## مصر: اعتقال كاتبة ومجموعة من الناشطين بغض النظر عن الحالة الصحية وحقوق

النسانالربيعاء 81 اذار 2020

قالت منظمة القلم الدولي في بيان مشترك مع كل من القلم المريكي والقلم النكليزي ان اعتقال والقاء القبض على عدد من الناشطاء في مصر بمن فيهم الكاتبة والناشطة المصرية البارزة أهداف سويف، يدل على ان الحكومة المصرية معنية بسمعتها أكثر من اهتمامها بحقوق مواطنيها، بما في ذلك الحق في حرية التعبير والحق في الحصول على المعلومات. وتم اعتقال سويف وعدد من الناشطاء الآخرين خلال احتجاج نظموه للمطالبة بالفراج عن المعتقلين لكبح انتشار فايروس كورونا في السجون المصرية. في 18 مارس 2020 شاركت سويف في احتجاج امام مبنى مجلس الوزراء المصري الى جانب كل من الكاديمية رباب المهديوشقيقتها الكاديمية ليلي سويف وابنة شقيقتها الناشطة منى سويف. حيث قامت [منسبب الاحتجاج](#) مباشرة على فيسبوك، موقعة مواجهة مع ضباط شرطة [طلبوا](#) من المحتجات التوقف مباشرة عن الاحتجاج و«مناقشة المر» في قسم الشرطة. ثم تمت مصادرة هواتفهن المحمولة واغالقها على مايببدو. وبحسب خالد علي، المحامي المختص بحقوق النسان، فان المجموعة قد [اختجرت](#) نقي قسمانليل في وسط القاهرة. وفي وقت الحق ووفقا الحد افراد السرة، تم نقل الربعة خارج القسم في سيارة شرطة [ويواجهون](#) الناتهامات بالتجمع والاحتجاج غير القانونيين وعرقة ومنع حركة المرور.

وحسب مديرة برنامج «حرية التعبير في خطر» في القلم المريكي [كارن دويتش كارليكار](#) فان اعتقال سويف وعائلتها يمثل هجوما فاضحا على حرية التعبير ويظهر تعامل السلطات المصرية النعكاسي مع جائحة فايروس كورونا من خلال إسكات الصوات

المعارضة لحماية صورة الدولة، ضاربة بعرض الحائط الصحة العامة والحقوق الأساسية. كما اضافت كارليكار انه يحق لسويفو عائلتها الاحتجاج على سياسات الحكومة والتي من شأنها ان تعرض عددا كبيرا من المواطنين للخطر، مُضيفة انه على سلطات القاهرة اطلاق سراح هؤالء الناشطات على الفور. وبينما يُركز العالم جهوده على مواجهة كوفيد 91، فان الحكومة المصرية تقوم بمضايقة المراسلين الجانب واعتقال المدافعين عن حقوق الانسان ممن يحتجون ضد ممارساتها. من الواضح ان السلطات المصرية تتأمل ان يمر سلوكهم البلطجي خلال هذه الفترة المخيفة بدون ان يلاحظه احد، لكن هذا لن يحدث. ندعو المجتمع الدولي لمواجهة اجراءات مصر القامعة لحرية التعبير والمتخفية تحت غطاء تهديد فايروس كورونا.

وفي سياق اجراءاتها لمواجهة انتشار الفايروس في البلاد، قامت السلطات المصرية بتعليق الزيارات للسجون لمدة عشرة ايام مما اثار قلق اسر المحتجزين. في حين يقبع ابن اخت سويف، الناشط علاء عبد الفتاح والذي سبق ان قضى ست سنوات في السجن انتهاك قانون الاحتجاج في مصر في السجن مجددا منذ اعتقاله في ايلول الماضي.

وكانت حرية التعبير في مصر قد تدهورت بشكل كبير خلال السنوات السبع الماضية في ظل حكم الرئيس عبد الفتاح السيسي. منذ بدء تفشي فايروس الكورونا، يتعرض الحق في الاحتجاج وحرية الصحافة للخطر بشكل خاص. في يوم الاثنين قامت مصر بالغاء ترخيص مراسل الجارديان البريطانية وهددت السلطات بالغاء تصريح عمل الصحيفة في البلاد بعد ان نشرت الصحيفة تقرير ايشيرالى ان عدد الحالات في مصر اعلى من العدد المعلن عنه. واصدرت الحكومة بيانا اتهمت فيه ديكالان والنش رئيس مكتب نيويورك تايمز في القاهرة بارتكابه «مخالفات مهنية» في اعقاب التغطيات التي اشار فيها الى ان العدد المعلن عنه من قبل السلطات للمصابين بفايروس كورونا هو اقل من الواقع.

وقال سليل تريبثاتي رئيس لجنة أكتاب المسجونين التابعة للقلم الدولي انه يجب على الحكومة المصرية ان ترتقي في ادائها الى الدور الذي يجب ان تلعبه كحكومة وان تُفرج فوراً عن سويف ورفيقاتها ممن كُن يُطالبن باطلاق سراح السجناء لمنع تعرضهم لالصابة بفايروس كورونا. كما اضاف تريبثاتي ان سجن الدباء اللذين يجا هرون بقول الحقيقة للسلطة هو خدعة استبدادية قديمة، واضاف انعلى مصر ان تعود عن هذا المسار.

## Turkey: Global call to lift advertising ban on the newspaper Evrensel

Monday 16 March 2020 - 4:55pm

*In a letter addressed to Basın İlan Kurumu, the authority responsible for the distribution of state advertising in Turkey, PEN International and 23 press freedom and freedom of expression groups are calling for the immediate end to the public advertising ban that has been imposed on the independent newspaper Evrensel since September 2019. Should the ban last for a full six months, Evrensel faces being removed from the system for at least three years, which would be catastrophic for its financial stability.*

Rıdvan Duran,  
General Director, Basın İlan Kurumu (BIK)  
Merkez Efendi Mah. Mevlana Cad. No: 140/A  
Toya Plaza Kat: 5 Zeytinburnu / İSTANBUL

March 16, 2020

Dear Mr. Duran,

On behalf of the 24 international and local press freedom organisations and signatories to this letter, we are writing to ask that Basın İlan Kurumu (BIK) swiftly lift the advertising ban currently imposed on the newspaper Evrensel.

Evrensel has been under an advertising ban since September 2019, and if the ban remains in place for a full six months, until March 28, 2020, Evrensel faces being removed from the public advertising system for at least three years.

Such a decision would have a devastating impact on the finances of the newspaper, threatening its closure and weakening the diversity and pluralism of Turkey's newspaper market.

In February you met with representatives of the International Press Institute (IPI), Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Journalists Syndicate of Turkey (TGS), Reporters sans Frontières (RSF) and the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) and assured them that the ban would be lifted as soon as Evrensel made the necessary changes to their distribution system so as not to fall foul of the bulk buying rules.

Evrensel have since made the changes requested of them, but have three times had their appeals refused after new audits conducted by BIK.

BIK was given a crucial democratic role when it was established in 1961 to provide support to the country's newspaper sector through the even distribution of public advertising funds. The system has become essential to the survival of many newspapers as the economic pressures on the print industry have grown over the past decade.

BIK's role is therefore vital to ensure the health, diversity and plurality of Turkey's newspaper sector. Central to that is, of course, its policy to provide support regardless of a newspaper's editorial line. Evrensel is known for its independent reporting and has, in recent years, been targeted for judicial harassment as a consequence.

In addition to the indefinite ban, since September BIK has also issued three other limited bans on Evrensel for alleged 'press ethics violations'. Further penalties would strongly suggest that BIK is being used to punish Evrensel for its independent reporting.

We urge you, therefore, to make good on your promise and to ensure the prompt lifting of the ban on Evrensel prior to the end of the six-month deadline.

We also take this opportunity to urge BIK to start publishing annual reports on the distribution of its funds that we understand amount to 450 million Turkish Lira of public funds and on the different disciplinary measures taken against newspapers. Providing transparency on BIK's use of public funds would enable the public to verify that its money is used correctly and is consistent with the principles of supporting a pluralistic and democratic media environment.

Kind regards,

## Human rights day: the perspective from Uganda

Tuesday 4 February 2020 - 8:33am

*To commemorate Human Rights Day, PEN International and PEN Centres are launching an essay series and holding events on human rights issues across the globe.*

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In 2013, reporter Peter Kanaakulya was covering a procession of opposition leaders led by Dr. Kizza Besigye and Lord Mayor of Kampala, Erias Lukwago. The procession was intercepted by the police and Kanaakulya was pepper sprayed and beaten. His camera fell and he had to jump out of the car to safety. The police later called the TV station where he worked and asked him to retrieve his camera.

*“From then, I vowed never to go to Central Police Station again, nor to go back to the field,”* he said. He now focuses on administrative and production work for online television station MRU TV. In another incident, the police forced him to delete the footage he had recorded. *“I had to delete it so that they wouldn’t hurt me,”* he explained. *“For a journalist, your weapon is a camera and recorder so that you tell the truth to the public.”*

Over the years, the police have continued to harass journalists, even when they wear their press credentials. According to Human Rights Network for Journalists-Uganda’s Press Freedom Index for 2018, 163 cases of violations and abuses were reported. According to the same Press Freedom Index, the police have been the leading offender of media rights in the past ten years. Of the 163 cases, the police were responsible for 87, representing 53 per cent of all documented cases in 2018. *“Journalists will keep away from political situations and they will censor themselves, and then the general public will be denied information,”* says Margaret Sentamu-Masagazi, the Executive Director of Uganda Media Women’s Association.

When interviewed for this piece, other specialists concurred. *“Journalists are scared to report, yet the public has a right to information,”* says Komakech Henry Kilama, a human rights lawyer and legal practitioner.

*“Journalists are the eyes and ears of the public and if they are unable to cover events then the public will miss out on a lot of information,”* says Diana Nandudu, Legal Officer at Human Rights Network of Journalists-Uganda.

### **Attacks on Journalists and Media Freedom**

In February 2018, according to Human Rights Watch, five unidentified men wearing military uniforms, and later identified as agents from the Internal Security Organisation (ISO), apprehended an investigative journalist with the New Vision newspaper. The journalist was released six days later, following a court ruling against the ISO. The journalist had recently published an article linking ISO agents to the death of a Finnish businessman.

In another incident in the same year, two journalists were arrested and beaten by security forces as they reported on a by-election and the shooting of Yasin Kawuma, the driver of Bobi Wine,



musician and member of parliament. The journalists were subsequently charged with ‘malicious damage to property and incitement of violence’, and then conditionally released.

Still in 2018, soldiers harassed journalists covering protests, including confiscating and damaging the equipment of a photojournalist who was trying to carry out his work.

In light of the situation above, on World Press Freedom Day 2019, the European Union Delegation, alongside a number of other European missions and the Heads of Mission of Iceland, Japan, Norway, Republic of Korea and United States, issued a joint statement expressing deep concerns over a series of incidents restricting the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly in Uganda.

However, attacks against journalists continued throughout the second half of 2019.

In November 2019 the police fired tear gas at a group of journalists who were protesting alleged brutality by police. In the same month, village information officer David Kibuuka was killed by live bullets allegedly fired by the police, while he was covering a protest.

Female journalists who face violence in their professional duties

One incident occurred in 2017, when a TV reporter was kidnapped by two unknown people and beaten, apparently over her coverage of a dispute between outspoken academic, activist and poet Stella Nyanzi and Janet Museveni, who is minister of education and President Yoweri Museveni’s wife. The kidnappers shaved the reporter’s head, beat her and threatened to torture her. Stella Nyanzi herself has just been released from jail after her 18-month prison sentence for alleged cyber harassment of the president on Facebook was overturned by an appeal court. Her original conviction indicates that no space is safe for Ugandans to criticise the authorities.

In another instance, five female journalists were stoned by police officers as they reported on the outbreak of a fire at Katwe Police Station on 24 August 2017.

Harassment of female journalists is of particular concern in that “*the impact of violence is greatest on female journalists so they will find other career paths, such as public relations or communications, where they are more comfortable,*” says Masagazi of the Uganda Media Women’s Association.

### **Restrictions on artists**

Journalists are not the only ones who face restrictions on their right to freedom of expression; artists also face harassment and censorship. On many occasions, politician and singer Robert Kyagulanyi, popularly known as Bobi Wine, has been prevented by the police from performing and arrested for reasons such as making inadequate preparations for his performance.

Additionally, a performance poet is no longer allowed to perform some of his political poems at the National Theatre in Kampala. He continues to write his ‘angry’ poems and perform in different spaces.

### **A way forward**

Police harassment against journalists and others who use their voice to criticise the authorities is rampant, and there are fears that the situation will worsen as the 2021 elections approach.

The public must show its support for media associations and media owners so that together, Ugandans can push for the safety of journalists and artists and for freedom of expression in general. The Government of Uganda must respect and adhere to the provisions of the 1995 Constitution, which provides for freedom of expression.

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*Beatrice Lamwaka is the Vice President PEN Uganda and board member FEMRITE – Uganda Women Writers Association. Her collection of short stories, Butterfly Dreams and other stories was published a few years ago. Her short story is featured in the acclaimed, New Daughters of Africa: An International Anthology of Writing by Women of African Descent (2019). She was awarded by*

*Uganda Registration Service Bureau for her literary contributions in 2018. She is a recipient of the*

*2011 Young Achievers Award, was shortlisted for the 2015 Morland Writing Scholarship and the 2011*

*Caine Prize for African Writing, and was a finalist for the 2009 South African PEN/Studzinski Literary Award. The anthology of short stories, Queer Africa (2013), to which she contributed, won the 26th Lambda Literary Award in 2014.*

## **China: PEN condemns prosecution of publisher Gui Minhai**

Tuesday 25 February 2020 - 1:55pm

*London, 25 February 2020 – The conviction and sentencing of Swedish-Chinese publisher Gui Minhai to 10 years in prison on charges of ‘providing intelligence’ abroad appears to be in retaliation for his work as a publisher and in response to international calls for his freedom, said PEN International today, as it called on the Chinese authorities to quash his conviction and release him immediately and unconditionally.*

*‘This is devastating news for the entire PEN community. We stand firm in our assertion that Gui Minhai is being targeted simply for his work as a publisher. This is clearly a punitive move against Gui Minhai because of the global attention his case has attracted over the last four years. Our message to the Chinese authorities is simple: we will continue to campaign for Gui Minhai’s freedom and freedom of expression in China,’ said Jennifer Clement, President of PEN International.*

In a trial shrouded in secrecy, a court in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, confirmed that Gui Minhai had plead guilty to charges of ‘providing intelligence’ abroad and was sentenced to 10 years in prison as well as five years suspension of his political rights thereafter. He is not expected to appeal. In light of his past persecution and coerced statements, it appears very likely that the conviction is politically motivated.

The conviction comes on the back of increased calls for his freedom from the international community. On 15 November 2019, Swedish PEN bestowed its Tucholsky award – given to a writer or publisher who faces persecution or has been forced into exile – upon Gui Minhai in recognition of his work as a publisher in Hong Kong and the persecution that he has faced as a result. The decision was met with condemnation from the Chinese authorities and veiled threats from the Chinese Embassy to Sweden.

A Chinese-born Swedish citizen, Gui Minhai is a member of the Independent Chinese PEN Centre, (ICPC), and a co-founder of Mighty Current, a publishing house based in Hong Kong which prints books often critical of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Gui Minhai moved to Sweden as a student and where he subsequently claimed citizenship. In doing so, Gui Minhai effectively forfeited his Chinese citizenship, as China does not recognise dual nationality. The court in Ningbo also indicated that Gui Minhai had applied to restore his Chinese citizenship in 2018.

*“The claim that Gui Minhai has applied for Chinese citizenship and thereby in practice forfeited his Swedish citizenship is preposterous. This statement must be regarded as pure propaganda,” said **Jesper Bengtsson, Chairperson of Swedish PEN.** “Every organisation that has freedom of expression on its agenda is engaged in the case of Gui Minhai, and they, like us, will continue along this line. In the wake of this verdict, it is positive that the Swedish government has not changed its position on the case. Gui Minhai must be released.”*

In October 2015 Gui Minhai was one of five individuals associated with Mighty Current and its retail arm, Causeway Bay Book Store, to have disappeared, only to re-appear in the custody of the Chinese authorities three months later.

Gui Minhai was held incommunicado for months before appearing in a televised ‘confession’ widely believed to have been coerced, in which he claimed that he had voluntarily surrendered himself to the Chinese authorities over his supposed involvement in a fatal hit-and-run incident which took place a decade earlier.

Two years after his disappearance, in October 2017, Gui Minhai was released on condition that he did not leave the country and was required to report regularly to the police. Although there is no indication that he was ever convicted of a crime, he was reportedly released as he was considered to have served his sentence for the alleged traffic incident.

On 20 January 2018, Gui Minhai was re-arrested while travelling by train to Beijing in the company of two Swedish diplomats. Gui Minhai was due to undergo a medical assessment at the Swedish embassy as he has exhibited symptoms of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis – a degenerative disease affecting the brain and spinal cord. In February 2018, Gui Minhai [appeared in a video](#) in which he confessed to ‘wrongdoing’ and accused Sweden of manipulating him. The statement is thought to have been made under duress.

*For further information please contact Asia Programme Coordinator, Emma Wadsworth-Jones at PEN International, Unit A Koops Mill Mews, 162-164 Abbey Street, London SE1 2AN, Tel. + 44 (0) 20 7405 0338, email: [emma.wadsworth-jones@pen-international.org](mailto:emma.wadsworth-jones@pen-international.org)*



April 2020  
Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico



To the PEN centers in Mexico, Latin America and the World

The PEN Center of Guadalajara wants to manifest its most energetic condemnation for the assassination of the Veracruz journalist María Elena Ferral Martínez, who was the victim of this crime on Monday March 30 in the city of Papantla, state of Veracruz.

Likewise we exhort the Mexican authorities to undertake a rapid and exhaustive investigation to clarify the details of this assassination, including an effective gender perspective and the circumstances related to her professional work, since this event was obviously a new attack against freedom of expression. We also request consideration of all possible lines of investigation.

Finally, the Guadalajara PEN Center wishes to express its heart felt condolence and solidarity with the family of María Elena Ferral Martínez, with her journalist colleagues and with all Mexican society.

Sincerely,  
PEN International Center of Guadalajara  
Arnulfo Velasco, President



## État de la programmation 2020

### Événements à venir

- **Mardi 12 mai, à 14h30** : Réunion du comité du PEN français
- **Mercredi 3 juin à 10h30** : Réunion du comité du PEN français
- **Samedi 20 juin** : Journée mondiale des réfugiés
- **20-21 juin** : réunion par visioconférence du Comité des femmes du PEN International
- **17-25 juillet** : Festival Voix Vives de Sète (Jean Le Boël et Sylvestre Clancier)
- **Fin août** : Book Arsenal Festival, Kiev (Emmanuel Pierrat)
- **Mercredi 2 septembre, à 14h30** : Réunion du comité du PEN français
- **Mercredi 9 septembre** : Soirée sur les poètes méditerranéens
- **22-25 septembre** : Comité des écrivains pour la paix du PEN International à Bled
  - **Mercredi 7 octobre, à 14h30** : Réunion du comité Français suivie d'une discussion sur le thème « écrire entre les langues »
- **Jeudi 15 octobre** : Manifestation autour de l'œuvre en prose de Georges Emmanuel Clancier à 18h à la SCAM (Sylvestre Clancier)
- **21-25 octobre** : Participation du PEN Club au Marché de la Poésie anthologie Poésie Amérique Latine.
- **2-6 novembre** : 86<sup>e</sup> Congrès du PEN International à Uppsala
- **Novembre 2020** : Partenariat avec Ent'revues dans le cadre du Festival Visions d'exil au Musée national de l'immigration
- **Dimanche 15 novembre** : Journée mondiale des écrivains persécutés
- **Mardi 17 novembre, à 15h** : Réunion du comité suivie d'un colloque du comité des écrivains en prison.
- **Dimanche 29 novembre** : Participation du PEN Club au 3<sup>ème</sup> Salon des Poètes et de la Mélodie française (Salle Gaveau)

- **Première semaine de décembre 2020** : Réunion du Comité des femmes du PEN International et du Comité de traduction et des droits linguistiques à Rangoun (Linda Maria Baros)
- **Mardi 15 décembre, à 15h** : Réunion du comité du PEN français et Assemblée Générale
- **Jeudi 17 décembre** : Remise du Grand Prix de la Critique (Antoine Spire, Laurence Paton)
- **Décembre 2020 ou janvier 2021** : Réunion intermédiaire du Comité des écrivains pour la paix du PEN International (Bamako)
- **Mai 2021** : Réunion du PEN International à San Miguel de Allende
- **2022** : Congrès du PEN International à Nantes

### Événements annulés

- **16 mai** : Festival Quartier du Livre, Mairie du 5<sup>ème</sup> : « Peut-on interdire les mots ? » (Andréas Becker). **Événement annulé.**

### Événements reportés

#### a) Événements nationaux reportés

- **Samedi 21 mars à 14h** : Livre Paris, Débat : « Sensitivity readers / Liens entre sensibilité, censure et liberté de publier et liberté d'expression » (Emmanuel Pierrat). **Manifestation suspendue (date de report à définir).**
- **Jeudi 26 mars** : Débat en partenariat avec Ent'revues « La privation de la liberté d'expression » (Emmanuel Pierrat, Andréas Becker, Antoine Spire). **Manifestation suspendue (date de report à définir).**
- **Lundi 30 mars à 18h30** : Journée mondiale du théâtre à l'Institut Cervantès suivie d'un cocktail (David Ferré). **Manifestation suspendue (date de report à définir).**
- **Jeudi 9 avril, à 18h** : Soirée-rencontre Werner Lambersy et Philippe Bouret sur leur livre d'entretiens *Lignes de Fond* (Andréas Becker et Sylvestre Clancier). **Manifestation suspendue (date de report à définir).**
- **Jeudi 15 avril, à 18h30** : Soirée autour de la revue Apulée et des Ouïghours. **Reporté à l'automne (date de report à définir).**
- **Mardi 12 mai, à 14h30** : Soirée en hommage à Jack-Alain Léger à 18h (Emmanuel Pierrat). **Report en raison d'un projet d'édition pour 2021. L'événement sera donc programmé pour 2021.**
- **Mercredi 3 juin à 10h30** : Après-midi Francophonie (Malick Diarra). **Manifestation suspendue (date de report à définir).**
- **10 au 14 juin** : Participation du PEN Club au Marché de la Poésie + anthologie Poésie Amérique Latine. **Événement reporté au mercredi 21 octobre 2020 - dimanche 25 octobre 2020.**

## b) Événements internationaux reportés

- **22-25 avril** : Comité des écrivains pour la paix du PEN International à Bled. Événement reporté au 22, 23, 24 et 25 septembre.
- **17-23 mai 2020** : Réunion du Comité des femmes du PEN International et du Comité de traduction et des droits linguistiques à Rangoun (Linda Maria Baros). Événement reporté à la première semaine de décembre 2020.
- **22-23 mai** : Book Arsenal Festival, Kiev (Emmanuel Pierrat). Événement reporté fin août 2020.
- **6-13 septembres** : 86 e Congrès du PEN International à Uppsala. Reporté au 2 - 6 novembre 2020.

## Les membres du PEN Français publient

**Muriel AUGRY,**

- *Les lignes de l'attente*, calligraphies Abdallah Akar,, Montélimar, Éditions Voix d ' encre, 2020, 104 pages

