

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Allen M. Kopyy
Morton County State's Attorney
210 2nd Ave. NW
Mandan, ND 58554

29 September 2016

Dear Allen M. Kopyy:

Amnesty International USA is writing to call for your office to drop charges for trespassing against *Democracy Now!* journalist Amy Goodman.

On 3 September, protests of the Dakota Access Pipeline construction moved on to private property in response to the potential destruction of land that was earlier marked as containing burial grounds and sacred sites for the local Native American tribe. Amy Goodman, in her role as a member of the press, followed the flow of people on to this property and reported from the scene – thereby remaining in her role throughout the event as seeking and providing information to the public as a reporter and public watchdog. Her trespass on to this property was clearly related to, even essential to, effectively carrying out her role of covering the protest and making information about it available to the public. Therefore, we call on your office to review the circumstances of this incident and rescind the trespassing charges that were filed against Miss Goodman for her actions on that day.

While the North Dakota Private Investigation and Security Board is reviewing the use of dogs by private security personnel during the events on 3 September, it is the obligation of law enforcement to review the use of force by private security personnel in both the use of dogs and what appeared to be Oleoresin Capsicum spray (OC Spray) against individuals at this site. Even though individuals trespassed on to private property in order to carry out their protest against the destruction of potential cultural sites, law enforcement has an obligation to review all instances where force is used against members of

the public. Within this, the Morton County State's Attorney's Office should review the use of force by security personnel on this day and, if it is determined that the security personnel violated any laws in regards to the use of OC Spray and dogs, file criminal charges against those responsible.

The U.S. government is obligated under international law to respect, protect, and fulfill the human rights of Indigenous people, including the rights to freedom of expression and assembly. It is the legitimate right of people to peacefully express their opinion.

We look forward to your reply and would be happy to provide additional information as needed.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Huang". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Margaret" being more prominent than the last name "Huang".

Margaret Huang
Executive Director
Amnesty International USA