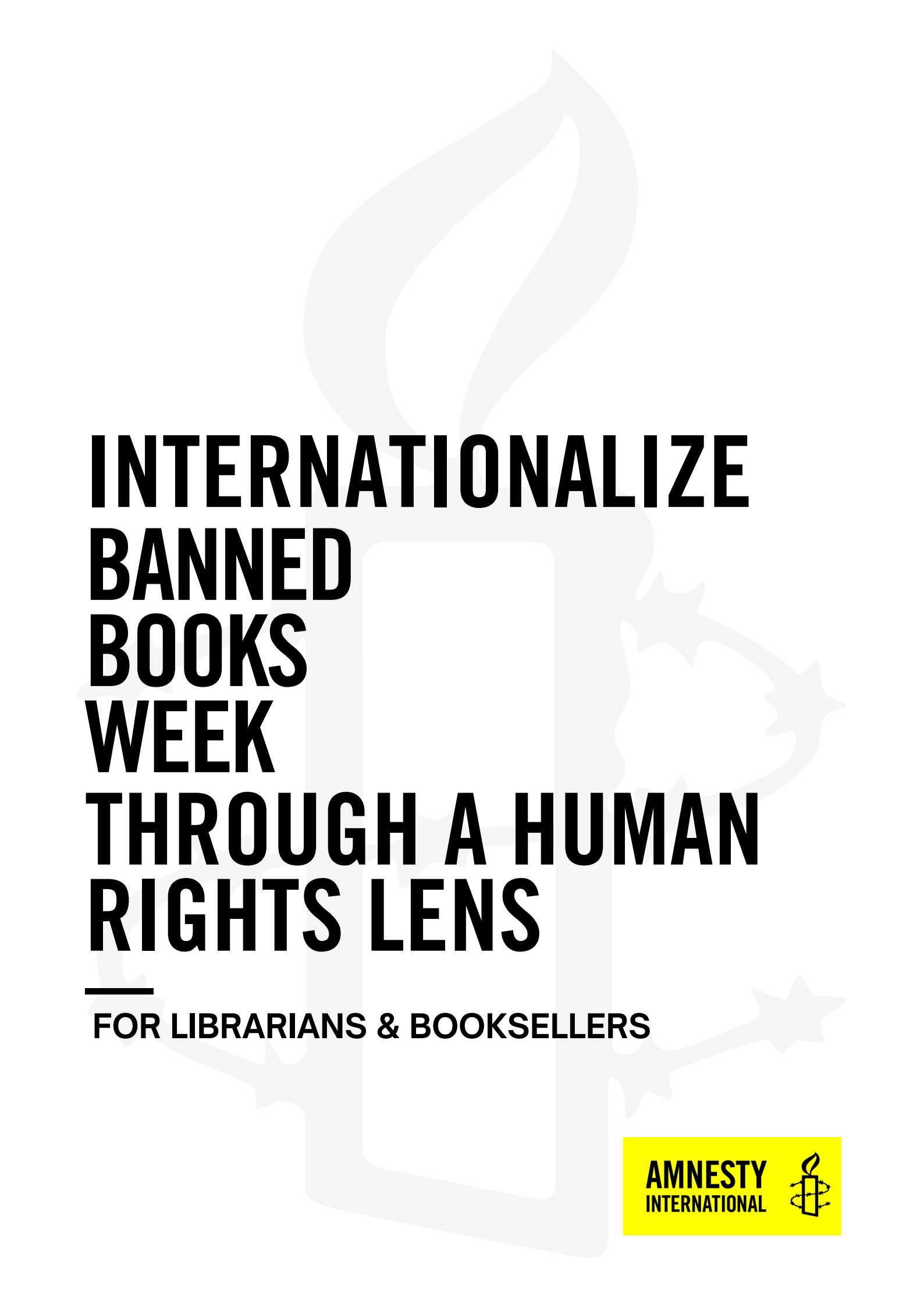




INTERNATIONALIZE BANNED BOOKS WEEK THROUGH A HUMAN RIGHTS LENS

FOR LIBRARIANS & BOOKSELLERS

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



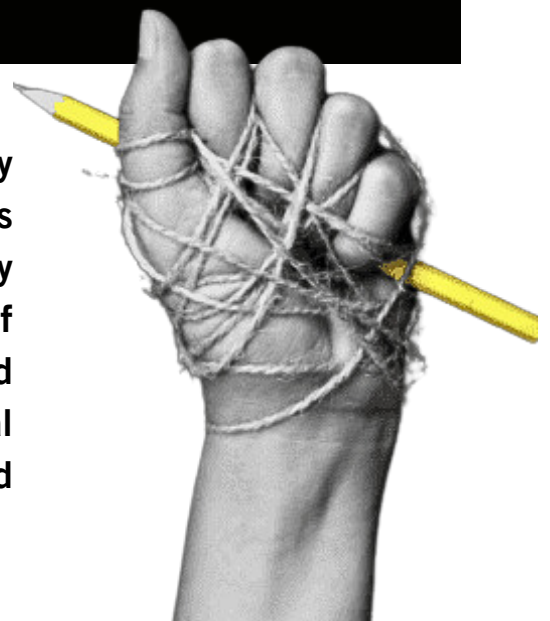
FOR LIBRARIANS & BOOKSELLERS

During **Amnesty International's 2026 Banned Books Week Action**, we spotlight people around the world who are persecuted for what they write, read, create, or share. By linking the freedom to read with the broader right to freedom of expression, Amnesty International joins the American Library Association and others to challenge censorship, expose its human rights consequences, and mobilize communities to defend the right of every person to speak, write, publish, and imagine freely.

In 2013, Amnesty International received the American Library Association's John Phillip Immroth Memorial Award for its contributions to Banned Books Week.

"For an approach to Banned Books Week that focused on the logical consequences that follow when governments are allowed to censor...beyond the removal or burning of books comes the removal and physical harm to authors, journalists and others."

Through a human rights lens, Amnesty International's Banned Books Week Action brings a global dimension to Banned Books Week by highlighting freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, and the stories of people imprisoned for their expression, alongside books and cultural materials censored in the United States and worldwide.



ACTIONS FOR LIBRARIES & BOOKSTORES

HOST A CREATIVE CARD-MAKING STATION *audience: all-ages activity*

Set up a card-making activity station in your library or bookshop as part of Amnesty International's Banned Books Week Action to invite visitors to send messages of hope and solidarity to people imprisoned or threatened for exercising free expression. Encourage participants to create cards with kind words, a favorite short poem or verse, or a simple drawing. A message of support can give hope and strength to someone jailed or threatened for speaking out, as well as their family members.



Former prisoners of conscience and others who were wrongfully detained have said that solidarity cards helped them endure prison and sometimes even led to better treatment when authorities saw the global support they were receiving. Please remind participants to keep messages kind, simple, and non-political. Do not mention Amnesty International, religious or political references, or details of the individual's case, as prison authorities may block delivery.

Learn more about the Solidarity Card Action by downloading the 2026 case sheets:

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/bbw2026>

SOLIDARITY CARD ACTION

SEND A MESSAGE OF HOPE!

A message of support can give hope and strength to someone jailed or threatened for speaking out, as well as their family members.

Former prisoners of conscience and other individuals who were wrongfully detained say solidarity cards helped them endure prison and sometimes even led to better treatment when authorities saw the global support they were receiving.

Keep messages kind, simple, and non-political. Do not mention Amnesty International, religious or political references, or details of the individual's case, as prison authorities may block delivery.

Suggested Messaging:

You are not forgotten. We are thinking of you and standing with you. People around the world are holding you in their hearts. Your courage inspires so many of us. Sending you strength, hope, and solidarity. I am sending you support and hoping for your freedom and safety.

ACTIONS FOR LIBRARIES & BOOKSTORES

ADD HUMAN RIGHTS TO BANNED BOOKS WEEK DISPLAY

A great way to raise awareness about Banned Books Week and encourage community members to engage at their own pace is to create a display in your library or bookstore. It is also an opportunity to help people learn about the invaluable gift of freedom of expression and the harm censorship causes. Please consider the recommendations below, along with the Amnesty International materials available on this year's website.

Create a human rights-themed Banned Books Week display using Amnesty International materials (see the following pages) to raise awareness and inspire action for freedom of expression. Submit a photo to iar@aiusa.org for a chance to win \$100 for your community library. Five winners will be selected on November 1, 2026.

Add Amnesty International's Banned Books Week Action to your display to defend freedom of expression, uphold human rights, and challenge censorship. Spotlighting the stories of Amnesty's 2026 cases helps show what happens when governments silence writers, artists, and activists. Include Amnesty's cases and books by persecuted writers from Amnesty International's Booklist.

Amplifying silenced authors can help prevent future imprisonment.



RESOURCES FOR BOOK DISPLAYS

Amnesty International's Booklist identifies books and films written by or about authors recognized by Amnesty International as individuals who have been arrested, murdered, harassed, exiled, or executed for their creative works, including writing, photography, music, and more.

The booklist features works by current and former Amnesty International Banned Books Week cases. Collectively, these books illuminate a range of major geopolitical challenges of the current millennium. Brief descriptions of the cases and books are available online, and a printer-friendly spreadsheet is provided to facilitate ordering.

Libraries and bookstores are encouraged to purchase and make available books by or about authors and publishers who have been imprisoned, murdered, or harassed for their writing or publications. Making these works available helps challenge censorship imposed by governments that suppress freedom of expression, often leading to other human rights violations.

To view the 2026 Amnesty Booklist:

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/toolkits/banned-books-week-booklist/> or scan the QR code:



Hold a BBW book club during September (or anytime) to focus on one of the featured titles, or have participants read different books that have been banned or challenged and then share their thoughts with the group. A silent read-in can also serve as a form of awareness and protest.

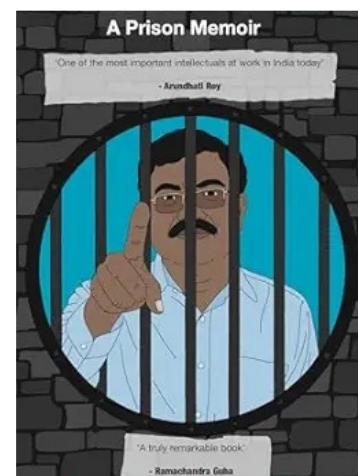
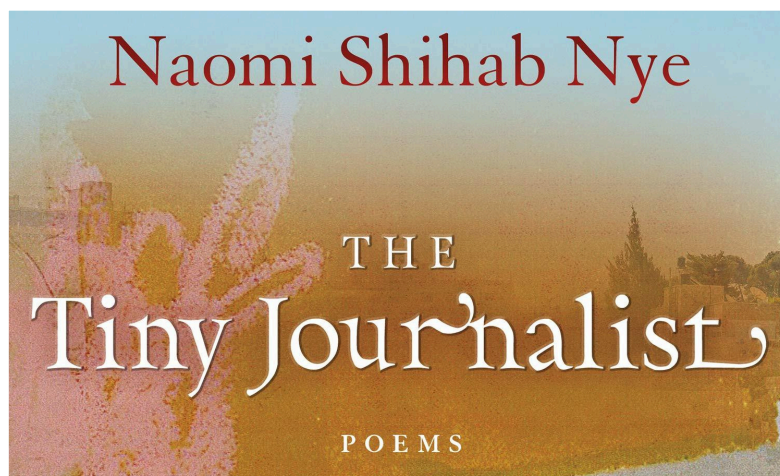
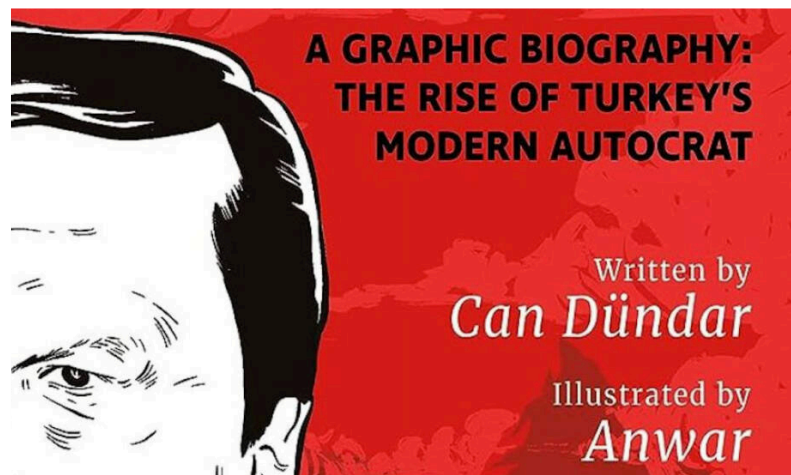
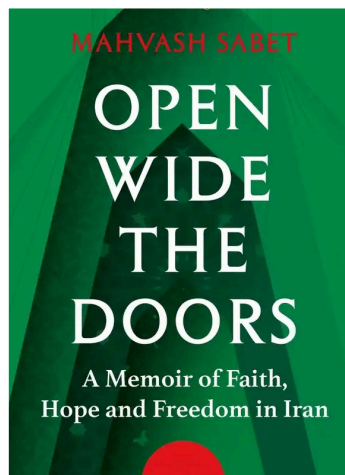
Note: he titles listed are not necessarily the cause of the author's persecution; rather, they represent the author's work and the possible silencing of a voice.

2026 Featured Books



THE TROUBLEMAKER

HOW JIMMY LAI BECAME A BILLIONAIRE,
HONG KONG'S GREATEST DISSIDENT, AND
CHINA'S MOST FEARED CRITIC



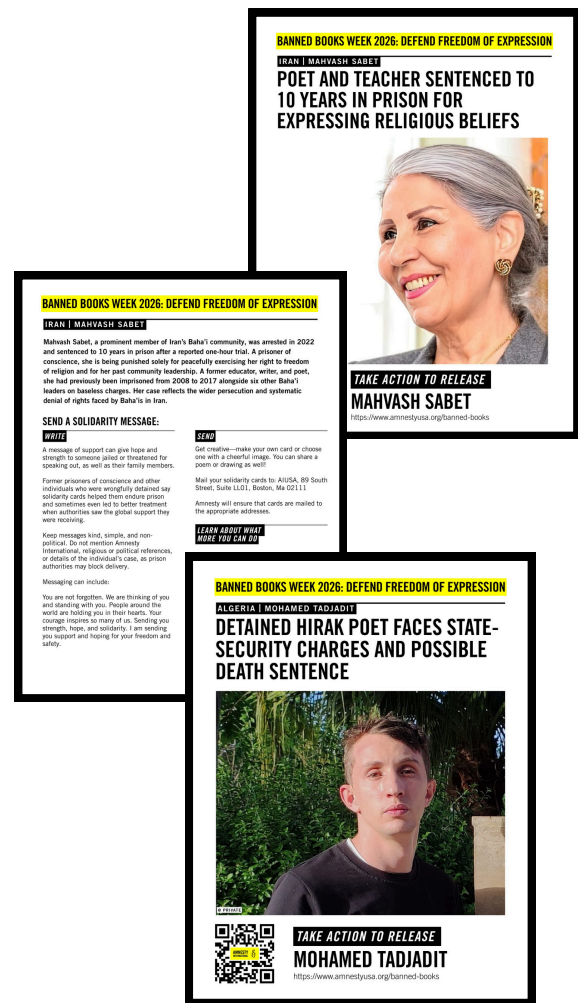
RESOURCES FOR BOOK DISPLAYS

2026 Casesheet Posters: Each year, Amnesty spotlights individuals from across the globe who are writers, academics, poets, musicians, artists, and online voices who have been detained, disappeared, or wrongfully imprisoned for exercising their right to free expression.

Include the 2026 spotlight cases in your display and show visitors how to take action. Each casesheet features an image of the individual, country and action title, QR code to an online petition, case background, and guidance for sending a solidarity card. Choose all seven cases or ones that resonate most with your community.

2026 Banned Books Week Freedom of Expression is a Human Rights poster: Amnesty International collaborates with musicians, visual artists, and creatives globally through its Art for Amnesty program. Working with a local artist to design our signature “Freedom of Expression is a Human Right” poster is just one way we integrate the arts into Banned Books Week Action.

Post your display on social media, and be sure to tag: [**@AMNESTYUSA**](https://www.amnestyusa.org)



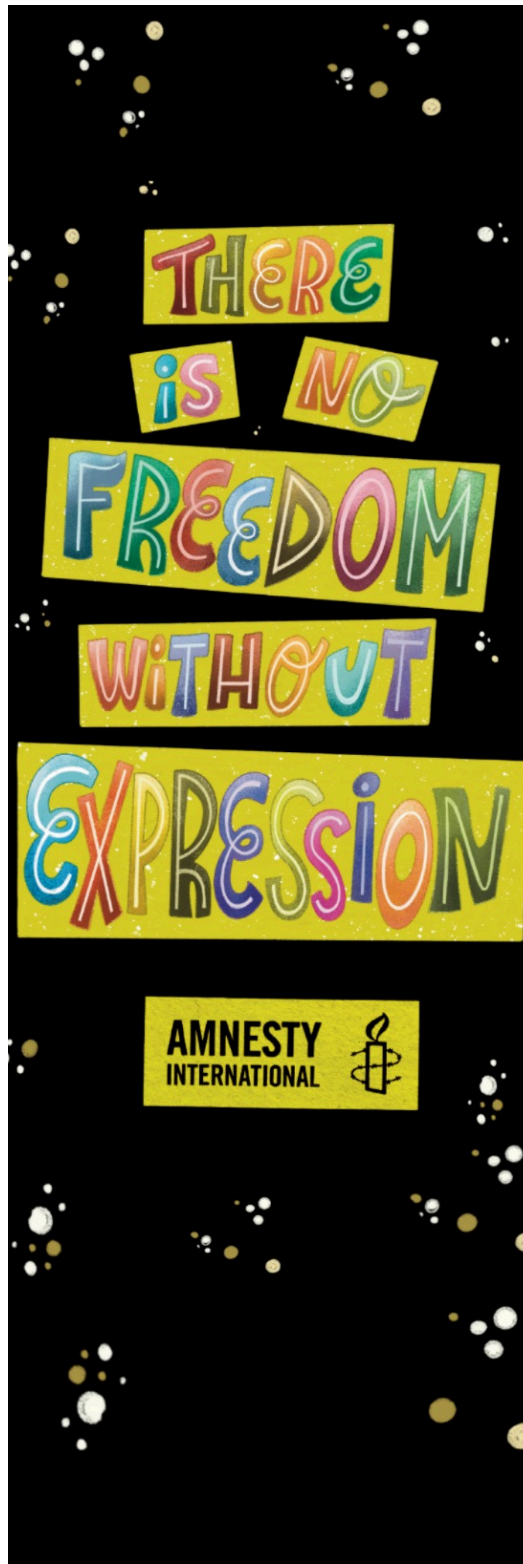
2026 BBW Action Poster

RESOURCES TO GIVE AWAY:

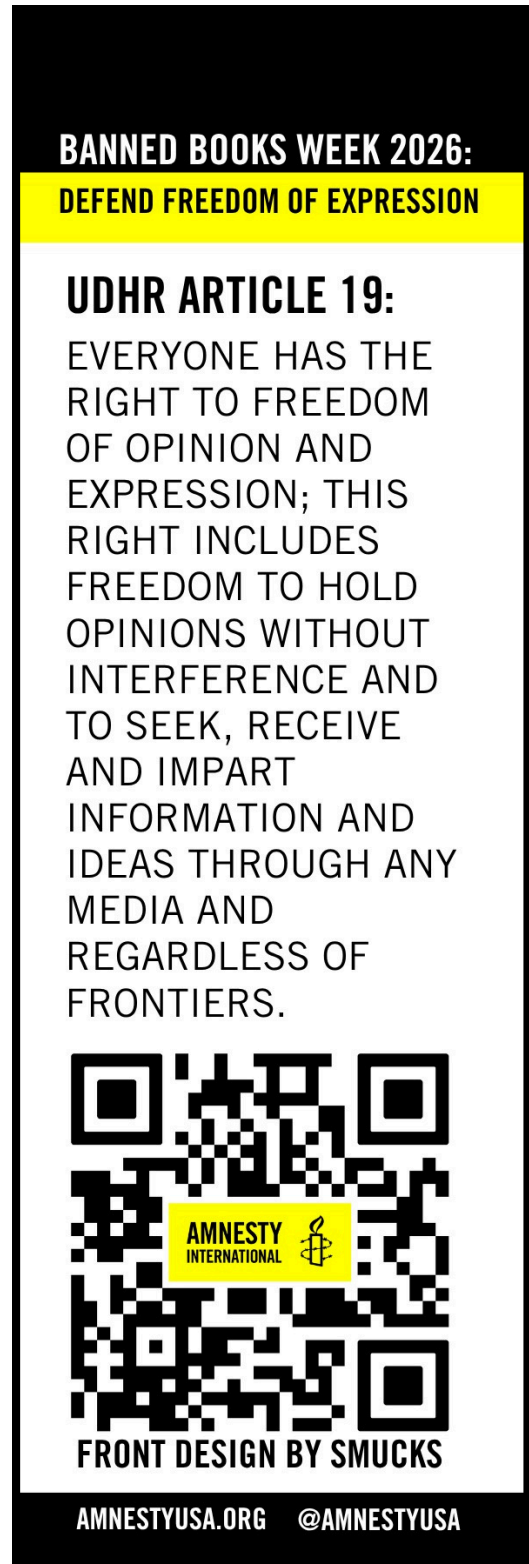
Order Your 2026 Banned Books Week Action

Bookmarks: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/bbw2026>

or scan the QR code:



(Front)



(Back)

HOST AN EVENT

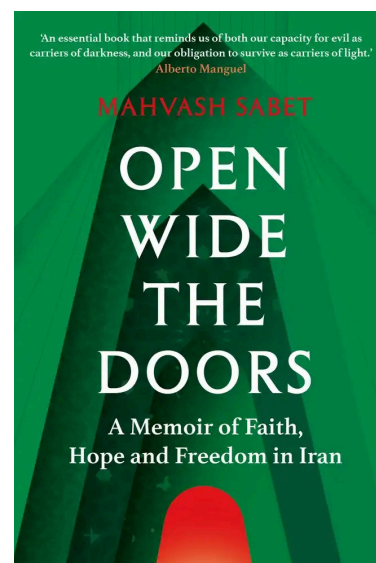
Partner with Amnesty International Community or Student Groups

Amnesty International activists organize actions and events in their communities and at their colleges and schools throughout the year. Amnesty's Local Groups and Student Groups are great partners if you would like to co-host an in-person or virtual event. These groups would almost certainly enjoy the opportunity to collaborate with their local library or bookstore. To find an Amnesty group in your community contact cgabriel@aiusa.org.

One simple way to involve local Amnesty International groups is to invite them to contribute to the book display. If permissible, they can add petitions associated with each case and advertise their local group activities.

Plan a Read Aloud Event

In communities around the country local or college libraries, bookstores, or community organizations have partnered to host Banned Books Read Aloud events and local Amnesty International groups have been invited to add information about current focus cases to the event. A read aloud event is a creative way to raise awareness on the issues at the heart of Banned Books Week. Consider whether you want to co-plan a read aloud event with a local Amnesty International group or whether you'd like them to simply contribute to the event.



Book authored by Mahvash Sabet, 2026 BBW Action Spotlight

Amnesty International groups can contribute to read aloud events by:

Sharing information about this year's focus cases; Reading the words written by this year's focus cases or sharing their visual creations; Setting up an Amnesty International table where folks can learn more about human rights, the current cases, and take action; Supporting your event!

RAISE AWARENESS

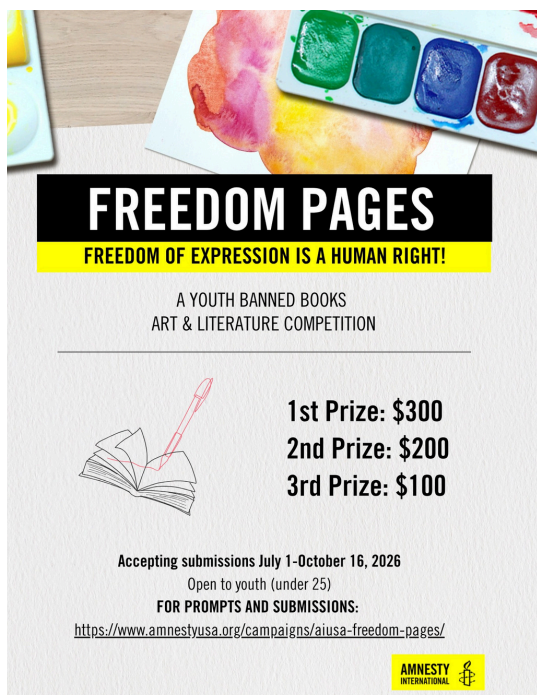
OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEFEND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Host a Freedom of Expression Workshop

Libraries and bookstores are spaces where ideas, dialogue, and community come together—making them powerful places to explore human rights. This workshop offers a welcoming, human-centered introduction to the foundations of human rights and the role free expression plays in protecting dignity and supporting civic space. Through storytelling, reflection, and interactive activities, participants will deepen their understanding of why freedom of expression matters, how it connects to other rights, and how they can help defend the right to speak, write, read, and share ideas freely.

Sessions can be adapted for different time lengths, age ranges, and learning environments. To learn more about Amnesty U's Community Human Rights Education Training program please contact cgabriel@aiusa.org.

Encourage Youth Artists to Enter Amnesty International's Freedom Pages Art & Literature Competition:

A poster for the Freedom Pages competition. At the top, there's a photo of a watercolor palette with various colors and a brush. Below this, the text 'FREEDOM PAGES' is in large, bold, black letters. Underneath, in a yellow banner, it says 'FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS A HUMAN RIGHT!'. Then, in smaller text, 'A YOUTH BANNED BOOKS ART & LITERATURE COMPETITION'. Below that, there's a drawing of an open book with a red pen resting on it. To the right of the drawing, the prizes are listed: '1st Prize: \$300', '2nd Prize: \$200', and '3rd Prize: \$100'. At the bottom, it says 'Accepting submissions July 1-October 16, 2026', 'Open to youth (under 25)', 'FOR PROMPTS AND SUBMISSIONS:', and a URL: 'https://www.amnestyusa.org/campaigns/aiusa-freedom-pages/'. The Amnesty International logo is in the bottom right corner.

FREEDOM PAGES
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS A HUMAN RIGHT!
A YOUTH BANNED BOOKS
ART & LITERATURE COMPETITION

1st Prize: \$300
2nd Prize: \$200
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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

LEARN MORE:



Amnesty International's

2026 Spotlight Cases

To learn more about these individuals and to download their case sheets and additional materials that maybe available to support showcasing thier work, please visit: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/bbw2026>

Algeria: Mohamed Tadjadit, known as the poet of the Hirak movement, has been arbitrarily detained since January 2025 solely for exercising his rights of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Algerian authorities have repeatedly targeted Mohamed because of his work. He is awaiting trial together with 12 other activists on state security charges punishable by long prison terms and the death penalty.

IOPT: Haitham Abdelwahed, a journalist, and **Nidal al-Waheidi**, a photojournalist from the occupied Gaza Strip, reported for independent outlets Ein Media and an-Najah Channel. On October 7, 2023, they were detained by Israeli forces while covering events near the Beit Hanoun/Erez checkpoint. Since their arrest, Israeli authorities have provided no clear legal basis for their detention and have refused to disclose their whereabouts. Human rights groups warn that Nidal and Haitham's case reflects a broader pattern of enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, and mistreatment of Palestinian detainees from Gaza—particularly journalists targeted for doing their work.

Iran: Mahvash Sabet, a prominent member of Iran's Baha'i community, was arrested in 2022 and sentenced to 10 years in prison after a reported one-hour trial. A prisoner of conscience, she is being punished solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of religion and for her past community leadership. A former educator, writer, and poet, she had previously been imprisoned from 2008 to 2017 alongside six other Baha'i leaders on baseless charges. Her case reflects the wider persecution and systematic denial of rights faced by Baha'is in Iran.

Mali: Rokiatou, known as Tata Rose, is a trader and social media influencer who spoke out against rising living costs and insecurity through her live broadcasts. On March 13, 2023, she was arrested, and two days later, she was charged with "incitement to revolt," "damage to the credit of the State," and "criminal association." In August 2023, a Bamako court sentenced her to one year in prison and a fine for "incitement to revolt and disturbing public order through information and communication technologies." After serving that sentence, she remained detained on additional charges. In December 2025, despite her previous conviction being overturned on appeal, authorities confirmed new prosecutions for "criminal conspiracy" and related offenses. She remains in prison, far from her family, with fears of prolonged pre-trial detention. Her case is a stark warning: freedom of expression is under threat, with devastating consequences for her and her children.

USA: Georgia Fort is a journalist and founder of a news organization dedicated to telling empowering stories rooted in Black communities. In January 2026, as federal immigration operations fueled fear across Minnesota, she documented a peaceful protest inside a St. Paul church held after ICE agents killed community observer Renee Good and involving a pastor who was also an acting ICE director. The federal government sought to arrest the journalists and other members of the press at the same time, but their request was denied on three separate occasions by a magistrate judge, district court judge, and appellate court judge. The Department of Justice then called for a grand jury hearing resulting in a grand jury indictment on three felony charges, including a hate crime statute against Georgia Fort and two other members of the press who reported on the demonstrations. Journalism is not a crime.

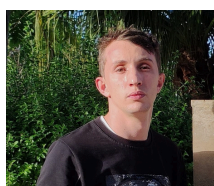
Russia: Daria Egereva is an Indigenous rights defender, climate leader, and a voice for the Selkup people of Western Siberia. She has spent years advocating for Indigenous cultures, languages, women's rights, and climate justice—carrying her community's stories from remote northern lands to the halls of the United Nations. Egereva is co-chair of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change and is a contributing author of several advisory reports reflecting indigenous perspectives related to climate issues. In December 2025, after returning from COP30 in Brazil where she represented Indigenous peoples in global climate negotiations, Daria was detained in Moscow. Russian authorities charged her with "participation in a terrorist organization" for her peaceful work with the Aborigin Forum, an Indigenous advocacy network. She now faces up to 20 years in prison. Her arrest came alongside raids on dozens of other Indigenous activists, signaling a sweeping crackdown on Indigenous civil society.

BANNED BOOKS WEEK 2026: DEFEND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

2026 INDIVIDUALS AT RISK SPOTLIGHT



USA: Journalist Georgia Fort, founder of a Black community news outlet, faces felony charges for covering a peaceful protest in Minnesota. Journalism is not a crime.



Algeria: Poet Mohamed Tadjadit, known as the Hirak movement's poet, has been arbitrarily detained since January 2025 and faces trial for peaceful expression and assembly.



Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories: Photo Journalists Haitham Abdelwahed and Nidal al-Waheidi were detained by Israeli forces on October 7, 2023 while reporting from Gaza, and their whereabouts are still undisclosed.



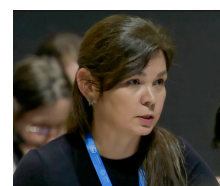
Iran: Poet and Teacher Mahvash Sabet, a Baha'i prisoner of conscience was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2022 after a reported one-hour trial, solely for peacefully exercising her freedom of religion.



Mali: Social media contributor and trader Rokiadou Doumbia or "Tata Rose" remains jailed for criticizing rising living costs and insecurity online, highlighting growing attacks on freedom of expression.



Philippines: Journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio remains detained after a 2020 raid and alleged evidence-planting, highlighting the dangers of red-tagging, which targets journalists, activists, and rights groups as communist fronts.



Russia: Daria Egereva, a Selkup Indigenous Rights Defender, co-chairs the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change and is a **contributing author** to reports on Indigenous climate perspectives. She now faces up to 20 years in prison for her peaceful advocacy.

DEFEND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION:
CHALLENGE CENSORSHIP

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/banned-books>

**TAKE
ACTION
NOW**

