

Global Call For The Release of Anwar Ibrahim

We the undersigned, stand in solidarity with Anwar Ibrahim, and condemn the politically motivated charges that led to his five-year prison sentence.

10 August 2015, marks Anwar Ibrahim's 68th birthday and his 182nd day as a prisoner of conscience. Prior to his imprisonment, Anwar Ibrahim was the Leader of Malaysia's emerging Opposition, and a prominent moderate Muslim leader who dedicated his political life to defend democracy, uphold the rule of law and sought social justice for all.

Anwar Ibrahim's trial took place after he led the opposition coalition to an unprecedented electoral victory in Malaysia's general elections in 2013, winning 51% of the popular vote. Many believe that this blow to the incumbent government's power prompted Anwar Ibrahim's conviction and imprisonment. The trial that eventually led to Anwar Ibrahim's conviction was seen as biased and unfair by the independent observers who attended the proceedings. The unfair trial, coupled with the political motivations behind it led Amnesty International to declare Anwar Ibrahim a prisoner of conscience.

As supporters of an independent and fair judicial system, we condemn such politically motivated convictions that serve those in power.

The political machinations behind Anwar Ibrahim's conviction are clear as Malaysian citizens who dared to criticise the outcome have been investigated and/or charged under the country's draconian Sedition Act. Many see Anwar Ibrahim's conviction as the beginning of an intense crackdown on freedom of speech and freedom of peaceful assembly in the country. The crackdown, which is ongoing, has even extended to social media. Numerous police investigations have been triggered over social media postings that are perceived to be critical of the government.

As believers in the right to the freedom of expression and the freedom of peaceful assembly, we call on the government of Malaysia to uphold the rule of law, and to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens.

We also note with great concern Anwar Ibrahim's deteriorating health, and the difficulties he has faced in receiving proper treatment. Anwar Ibrahim's treatment in prison is indicative of wider problems within the Malaysian prison system. We strongly urge the Malaysian government that touts itself as democratic country to immediately and unconditionally release Anwar Ibrahim from prison and uphold the principles of democracy.

John L Esposito
*Georgetown
University*

Tariq Ramadan
Oxford University

Richard Falk
Princeton University

Noam Chomsky
*Massachusetts
Institute of Technology*

Slavoj Žižek
University of London

Alfred Stepan
Columbia University

Francis Fukuyama
Stanford University

Larry Diamond
Stanford University

Nader Hashemi
Denver University

Shahrough Akhavi
Columbia University

Louay Safi
*Georgetown
University*

Abdelwahab El-Affendi
*University of
Westminster*

Avi Shlaim
Oxford University

Charles Butterworth
*University of
Maryland*

Emad El-Din Shahin
*Georgetown
University*

Saad Eddin Ibrahim
Egyptian Activist

Mohammad Fadel <i>University of Toronto</i>	Ziauddin Sardar <i>Muslim Institute</i>	Karen Armstrong <i>Author</i>	Tariq Modood <i>University of Bristol</i>
Farid Esack <i>University of Johannesburg</i>	Christos Giannou <i>War Surgeon</i>	James Reardon-Anderson <i>Georgetown University</i>	Tamara Sonn <i>Georgetown University</i>
Mohsen Kadivar <i>Duke University</i>	Harry L. Roque <i>Center for International Law Philippines</i>	Augusto N. Miclat Jr. <i>Initiatives for International Dialogue Philippines</i>	Herherson "Sonny" T. Alvarez <i>Phillipines Politician</i>
Ricardo G. Recto <i>Philippines Politician</i>	Luziminda C. Ilagan <i>Philippines Politician</i>	Silvestre Bello III <i>Philippines Politician</i>	General Jose T. Almonte <i>Philippines</i>
Amado D. Valdez <i>Philippine Association of Law Schools</i>	Fernando O. Peña <i>Ninoy Aquino Movement</i>	Ferdinand S. Topacio <i>Lawyer Philippines</i>	Margoux Salcedo <i>Philippines Journalist</i>
Jarius and Marisa Bondoc <i>Columnist Philippines</i>	<i>Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia</i>	<i>Networks Of Democrats in the Arab World</i>	<i>Center for Citizen's Alliance</i>
John Voll <i>Georgetown University</i>			