



FREEDOM NOW

Annual Report 2013

Freedom Now is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to free prisoners of conscience through legal, political, and public relations advocacy. Based in Washington D.C., Freedom Now serves individuals who have been wrongly imprisoned all over the world, seeking their freedom from detention and justice for the violation of their most sacred human rights.

Who We Are

Freedom Now Staff

Maran Turner, Executive Director
Patrick Griffith, Program Lawyer
Mirakmal Niyazmatov, Program Lawyer
Kelly Gaberlavage, Program Assistant

Freedom Now Board of Directors

Desmond Tutu, Honorary Chair

Jeremy Zucker, Chair
Dechert LLP

Peter Magyar
Magyar & Co. UK

Jared Genser, Founder
Perseus Strategies LLC

Thomas Dohrmann
McKinsey & Company

Teresita Alvarez-Bjelland
Former President of Harvard Alumni
Association

Joseph J. McCarthy
Former Associate Dean at the JFK School
of Government, Harvard University

Law Firm Partners

Freedom Now continues to be grateful for the support we receive from our law firm partners. It is because of this generous assistance from law firms we are able to help so many individuals.



Freedom Now in 2013

For more than twelve years, Freedom Now has come to the aid of prisoners of conscience. In 2013, we continued this effort and supported individuals all over the globe. Partnering with foundations, such as Open Society Foundation and law firms, such as Hogan Lovells, we helped free **SIX** individuals wrongly imprisoned in Iran, Rwanda, and Turkmenistan. A lawyer imprisoned for fighting for the human rights of Iranian citizens. A journalist imprisoned for reporting critically about the Rwandan President. Popular musicians detained because of their nonconformist style in Turkmenistan. And two journalists who spent nearly seven years in prison for helping European journalists expose human rights violations in Turkmenistan. All of these individuals are now free.

For others who remain wrongfully imprisoned, and on whose behalf we work, we provided international legal representation, transmitted emergency funds, and mobilized political and public awareness campaigns. We ensured our clients—who are journalists, human rights defenders, civic and labor activists, and community leaders—were not ignored; the injustice they suffer was recognized; and the governments who are illegally imprisoning them are held to account under international law.

Throughout 2013, international organizations and media reported a global decline in respect for fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms. Governments around the world took measures to attack press and internet freedom, restrict civil society organizations, limit political activism, and stifle religious freedom. Governments adopted legislation aimed at limiting rights guaranteed under international law—often inspired by the heavy-handed regimes of China, Russia, and Iran—and outrageously applied overly broad national security laws to punish peaceful critics with arrest and imprisonment.

Freedom Now is committed to working on behalf of prisoners of conscience, those crusaders who are detained for peacefully exercising fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of speech, belief, and association.

In 2013, Freedom Now worked on **22 cases** from **eleven countries**, representing more than **25 individuals**.

Freedom Now Recognized by the American Bar Association



As a testament to our work, Freedom Now's founder Jared Genser was named "Human Rights Lawyer of the Year" by the American Bar Association. "The Award is being presented for Jared's extraordinary contributions to the rule of law, access to justice, and human rights," said William R. Bay, Chairman of the ABA Section of Litigation. "His work on behalf of human rights has been a beacon of light in some of the world's darkest places."

Where Freedom Now worked in 2013



SIX Freedom Now Clients Released in 2013

Freedom Now is thrilled that we helped to secure the release of **SIX** clients in 2013:



Nasrin Sotoudeh (Iran) was released early by the Iranian government on September 18, 2013 after serving three years in prison on charges including "propaganda against the state." Prior to her arrest, the renowned human rights lawyer worked closely with the banned human rights organization, Center for the Defense of Human Rights, defending those persecuted by the Iranian government. Freedom Now worked with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Shirin Ebadi to release an [opinion](#) by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention finding Ms. Sotoudeh's detention in violation of international law and calling for her immediate release.



[Saidati Mukakibibi \(Rwanda\)](#) was released on June 25, 2013 after serving three years (a term reduced by the Supreme Court) in prison on charges of endangering national security. Ms. Mukakibibi was a journalist for the independent, Kinyarwanda-language newspaper, *Umurabyo*. Rwandan authorities arrested her after she wrote articles critical of Rwandan President Paul Kagame. Her colleague, **Agnes Uwimana Nkusi**, remains imprisoned and along with Hogan Lovells,

Freedom Now continues to advocate for her release.

[Annakurban Amanklychev and Sapardurdy Khadzhev \(Turkmenistan\)](#) were



[Annakurban Amanklychev \(left\) and Sapardurdy Khadzhev \(right\)](#)

released early in February 2013 after serving nearly seven years in prison on fabricated charges for illegal possession of munitions. Messrs. Amanklychev and Khadzhev were human rights journalists who at the time of their arrests were working on a documentary about then-President Niyazov's cult of personality. Freedom

Now, with *pro bono* support from Hogan Lovells LLC, submitted a [petition](#) to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary

Detention on their behalf and the Working Group [found](#) their detention illegal under international law in 2010. Freedom Now mobilized substantial political pressure on their behalf, marshaling action from the United States and European Union. Through the Prisoner of Conscience (POC) Fund, we were able to secure much-needed financial support to the two journalists and their families.

[Maksat Kakabaev \(aka MARO\) and Murad Ovezov \(Turkmenistan\)](#) were released



[Maksat Kakabaev \(left\) and Murad Ovezov \(right\)](#)

early from prison in February 2013 after serving approximately two years of their seven and five-year prison sentences, respectively. Prior to their arrests, they were popular singers in Turkmenistan. International observers believe that they were imprisoned for ideological overtones in their songs. Mr. Kakabaev and Mr. Ovezov were released as part of an amnesty celebrating National Flag Day just days

after Freedom Now helped coordinate a [letter](#) signed by 24 Members of the European Parliament calling for their release. Through the support of the POC Fund, we were able to help provide MARO and Murad with financial assistance.

Working on Behalf of Prisoners of Conscience in Eurasia



Freedom Now represents wrongly imprisoned individuals in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, and we recently initiated efforts to help imprisoned journalist [Hilal Mammadov](#) in Azerbaijan.

In 2013, we renewed our successful program with the Open Society Foundation to free prisoners of conscience in Uzbekistan and

Turkmenistan after welcoming the release of four Turkmen prisoners of conscience in February. As part of this campaign, Freedom Now adopted the cases of seven individuals in addition to the plight of nine [Jehovah's Witnesses](#) imprisoned in Turkmenistan for conscientious objection to military service. Our clients in the region are journalists, human rights defenders, and religious freedom activists.



[Hilal Mammadov](#) is an Azerbaijani editor and minority rights activist who was arrested on June 21, 2012 and sentenced to five years in prison on fabricated charges.



[Gulgeldy Annaniyazov](#) is a Turkmen human rights activist who returned to Turkmenistan in 2008 after living in Norway and was arrested for illegal entry and sentenced to 11 years in prison following a closed trial.



[Salijon Abdurakhmanov](#) is an independent journalist in Uzbekistan who was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2008 on fabricated drug charges.



[Azam Farmonov](#) is a prominent human rights defender in Uzbekistan who was arrested in 2006 on trumped-up extortion charges and is currently serving a nine-year prison sentence.



[Gaybullo Jalilov](#) is a prominent human rights defender in Uzbekistan who has been wrongfully detained since 2009 on security charges and is currently serving an 11-year prison sentence.



[Dilmurod Saidov](#) is a prominent Uzbek human rights activist and journalist, who was convicted on fabricated extortion charges and sentenced to 12 ½ years in prison in 2009.



[Akzam Turgunov](#) is a longtime human rights leader sentenced to ten years in prison in Uzbekistan as a result of his political and human rights activities, including anti-corruption advocacy.

Freedom Now has engaged in considerable legal and public advocacy on behalf of our Uzbek and Turkmen clients.

- We have published op-eds in the [European Voice](#) and [Eurasianet](#) to raise awareness.
- We have mobilized members of the [US Senate](#) and the [European Parliament](#).
- Freedom Now drafted and submitted three legal briefs to UN complaint procedure bodies. And in 2013, we obtained two opinions on our project cases from the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, finding the detentions of Mr. Saidov and Mr. Jalilov to be in violation of international law.
- The UN Human Rights Council reviewed all three project Eurasian countries in 2013 as part of its Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Freedom Now participated in this process, providing a report to the Committee about human rights abuses in these three countries, making recommendations, and briefing Council member states.
- Freedom Now's executive director addressed OSCE member states in October, which included representatives from Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, during the 2013 Human Dimension Conference in Warsaw.



Director Maran Turner speaking at the 2013 OSCE Conference on the Human Dimension in Warsaw, Poland.

Going into 2014, Freedom Now is building a web-based catalog of political prisoners in Uzbekistan. There are estimated to be thousands of wrongfully imprisoned individuals, most of whom receive little or no international attention. To generate more effective advocacy, Freedom Now is developing a guide for international prisoner advocacy, which we hope will be utilized by human rights defenders at home in Central Asia and abroad.

Representing Prisoners of Conscience in China

The Government of the People's Republic of China is one of the world's most infamous violators of human rights. The exact number of individuals detained is unknown, as many of them disappear into "black jails." The government imprisons lawyers, journalists, religious practitioners, and democracy activists.

Freedom Now undertook substantial advocacy in 2013, both publicly and privately, on behalf of Chinese prisoners of conscience. This year, Freedom Now became international *pro bono* counsel for [Chen Kegui](#), the nephew of renowned Chinese legal activist Chen Guangcheng. Following Chen Guangcheng's escape from illegal house arrest in April 2012, authorities charged Chen Kegui with "intentionally inflicting injuries" and sentenced him to over three years in prison after he attempted to defend himself from intruders who stormed his home without warrant and physically attacked his family.

In April 2013, Chen Guangcheng and Freedom Now Founder Jared Genser [testified](#) before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations about Chen Kegui's arrest and the Chinese government's continued persecution of human rights defenders and their families. In May 2013, Freedom Now helped to facilitate a [letter](#) to Secretary of State John Kerry from eight Members of Congress expressing concern about the ongoing persecution of the Chen family and Chen Kegui's poor health and mistreatment while in detention. In addition to an [urgent](#)



Chen Guangcheng along with Freedom Now Founder Jared Genser, China Director for Human Rights Watch Sophie Richardson, and Anthony Gallo with the National Press Club hold a press conference to raise awareness of Chen Kegui's case.



[Change.org petition](#)

[appeal](#) submitted to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Freedom Now and Chen Guangcheng submitted a [petition](#) to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on Chen Kegui’s behalf in September 2013, which they announced during a Newsmakers event at the National Press Club.

Freedom Now has also continued its work on behalf of imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

[Liu Xiaobo](#) and imprisoned human rights lawyer [Gao Zhisheng](#).

Freedom Now worked closely with the International Committee for Liu Xiaobo—a coalition of six Nobel Peace Prize Laureates and 15 NGOs—to organize a [letter](#) from 134 Nobel Laureates to Chinese President Xi Jinping calling for Liu Xiaobo’s immediate release from prison and his wife’s freedom from house arrest. The initiative also included a [Change.org](#) petition sponsored by Desmond Tutu and signed by approximately 450,000 individuals from around the world. The same month, Freedom Now Program



[Program Lawyer Patrick Griffith testifies before Congressional-Executive Commission on China.](#)

Lawyer Patrick Griffith [testified](#) before the Congressional-Executive Committee on China about Liu Xiaobo’s ongoing detention and his wife’s unlawful house arrest.

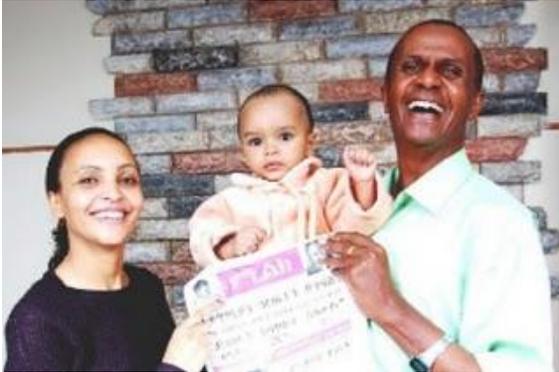
Geng He, the wife of imprisoned Chinese rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng testified during the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee hearing in April, and joined Mr. Genser in meetings with high-level government officials during her visit to Washington. In June 2013, Freedom Now joined 30 organizations in a [letter](#) urging President Obama to call for the release of prisoners of conscience in China, including Liu Xiaobo, Gao Zhisheng, and Chen Kegui, during his bi-lateral summit with President Xi.



[Geng He testifies before House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee.](#)

Freedom Now submitted a [report](#) as part of China’s UPR before the UN Human Rights Council. The report describes the widespread harassment of Chinese human rights advocates, lawyers, and their families and urges the government to respect the fundamental right to freedom of expression and association. Mr. Genser has recently reiterated this message and called on the Obama administration to prioritize Chinese prisoners of conscience in a series of op-eds in the [Wall Street Journal](#), the [LA Times](#), and [Washington Post](#).

Mobilizing Support for Journalists and Bloggers



Eskinder Nega with his wife and fellow journalist, Serkalem Fasil, and their young son.

In 2013, Freedom Now undertook a number of initiatives in our effort to free imprisoned Ethiopian journalist [Eskinder Nega](#). The government arrested Mr. Nega in 2012 under the country's much-criticized anti-terror laws after he wrote articles about the possibility of an Arab Spring-like movement in Ethiopia.

- Freedom Now submitted his case to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and won a [ruling](#) in April 2013 finding his imprisonment in violation of international law and calling for his immediate release.
- Freedom Now is partnering with other NGOs to focus international attention on Mr. Nega's case. In September 2013, Freedom Now collaborated with PEN International and the Committee to Protect Journalists to submit a [report](#) on Ethiopia's prosecution of journalists on terror charges as part of Ethiopia's UPR.
- In October, we partnered with Media Legal Defense Initiative to file a [petition](#) on behalf of Mr. Nega and fellow imprisoned journalist Reeyot Alemu to the African Commission on Human and People's Rights.
- Freedom Now has collaborated with former prisoners of conscience in an effort to raise awareness about arbitrary detention in the country through opinion pieces in [AlJazeera English](#), the [Wall Street Journal](#), and the University of Pretoria's [AfricLaw Blog](#).



The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention's ruling on Mr. Nega's case received attention from the media, including New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof who re-tweeted Freedom Now's press release announcing the decision.

Advocating for Labor Rights Activists in Vietnam

Freedom Now has partnered with the law firm Woodley & McGillivray, who provide their time and expertise on a *pro bono* basis, to advocate on behalf of imprisoned Vietnamese labor organizers [Doan Huy Chuong, Do Thi Minh Hanh, and Nguyen Doan Quoc Hung](#). In its first collaboration, the team submitted a [petition](#) to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on behalf of the activists in late 2011 and received an [opinion](#) in March of this year calling for their immediate release. The team filed an urgent action [request](#) with UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and submitted a UPR [report](#) on Vietnam to the United Nations.



Doan Huy Chuong, Do Thi Minh Hanh, and Ngyugen Doan Quoc Hung (from left to right)

Throughout the year, Freedom Now and Woodley & McGillivray have engaged with government officials to press for the release of Doan, Do, and Nguyen. At the end of last year, an [Early Day Motion](#) calling for their immediate and unconditional release was introduced by members of the UK Parliament and eventually secured the support of 28 parliamentarians. Our team continues to mobilize labor and human rights officials—as well as national and international labor organizations in the United States, Europe, and Asia—to ensure that the continued detention of Doan, Do, and Nguyen remains a priority for the international community.

To learn more about Freedom Now's work and our clients, please visit our website at <http://www.freedom-now.org> or follow us on Twitter @freedomnoworg.



FREEDOM NOW

Financial Report 2012-2013¹

Public Support and Revenue

	Audited 2012			2013, Through 3 rd Qtr		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Foundation Grants	22,020	132,196	154,216	108,743	-	108,743
Individual contributions	90,046	-	90,046	16,744	-	16,744
Donated Securities	531	-	531	-	-	-
Investment Income	114	-	114	110	-	110
Donated Legal Services	639,821	-	639,821	479,866 ^E	-	479,866 ^{E2}
Donated Property and Equipment	3,810	-	3,810	-	-	
Net Assets released from restrictions	197,194	(197,914)	-	-	-	-
Total Public Support and Revenue	953,563	(64,998)	888,538	605,463	-	605,463

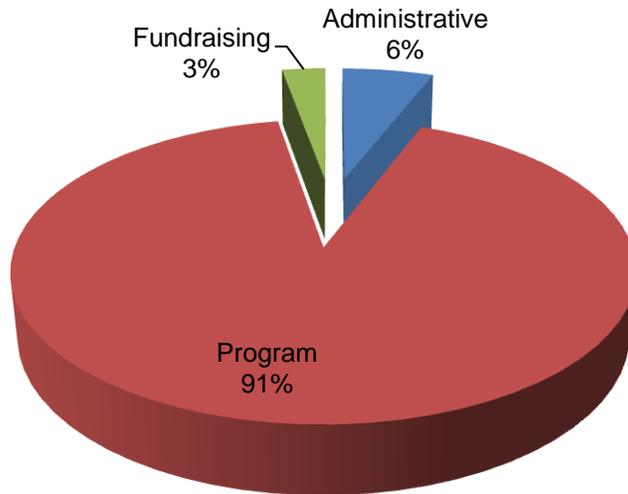
Expenses

	Audited 2012	2013, through 3 rd Qtr
Donated Legal Services	639,821	479,866 ^{E2}
Salaries	212,002	141,760
Payroll taxes and fees	17,671	11,851
Office rent	16,725	12,776
Travel and Meetings	14,062	4,113
Professional Fees	8,200	6,000
Telecommunications	4,970	2,985
Insurance	4,476	4,098
Grants	2,019	5,598
Donated Equipment	1,620	-
Depreciation	1,499	-
Printing and Supplies	877	623
Fundraising fees	433	372
Staff development	199	869
Bank Charges	184	86
Postage and delivery	149	162
Licenses and Fees	94	309
Miscellaneous	54	-
Total	930,414	671,468

¹ Our financial year runs January 1- December 31. The amounts listed for 2013 are incomplete. Freedom Now receives the bulk of its funds during November and December, which is not included in the amounts provided.

² Estimated value. Actual values for pro bono support received in 2013 will not be obtained until the end of the year.

2012 Expenses by Category



Foundation Support

Oak Foundation

Bradley Foundation

Open Society Institute

Moriah Fund

Pro Bono Law Firm Support

The Chambers of David Fisher Q.C. and
David Perry Q.C.

Hogan Lovells

Perseus Strategies LLC

Dechert LLP

Sidley Austin LLP

DLA Piper

WilmerHale

Gibson Dunn

Woodley & McGillivray