

Veteran Wetlands Activist Arrested & Tortured in Belgium for Photographing Arrests

500 Others Arrested, Many Tortured



Dr. Marianne Maeckelbergh is a professor and researcher at the University of Leiden in Holland. She is the author of <http://us.macmillan.com/thewilloftheman> and a long-time global justice, political prisoner solidarity, environmental, and animal rights activist. Marianne worked with Wetlands as a volunteer in the nineties, eventually joining our staff as the coordinator of our Animal Rights Action Team.

Last Friday, during the No Border Camp, "a convergence of struggles aiming to end the system of borders that divide us All," Wetlands veteran Marianne Maeckelbergh was arrested for taking pictures while police were making arrests in Brussels, Belgium.

Having just entered Belgium two and a half hours earlier, she was on the terrace of a cafe with friends when she witnessed violent arrests on the street. She went to take pictures and was herself arrested by the police chief. She was taken into police custody where she was violently dragged by her hair, chained to a radiator, hit, kicked, spat upon, called a whore, and threatened with sexual assault by the police. She also witnessed the torture of another prisoner also chained to a radiator.

This took place not in a dark corner of the police station but out in the open, directly witnessed by police station authorities who gave the impression that this was standard practice. Police removed her ID card, USB stick, the camera with the photos on it, and 25 euros in cash from her property and have refused to return them.

Roughly 500 people were arrested, many preemptively, including people involved in the No Border Camp and other protest activities including an alleged attack on a police station. As of Wednesday 6 October, 2010 at least four people are still incarcerated.

Your help is needed to secure the release of the remaining prisoners and to demand that the police be held accountable.

We are calling on the UN Committee Against Torture to investigate these events. Call on the US State Department to issue a statement condemning the torture of a US citizen and to contact the Belgian government.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:



Wetlands Activism Collective

Phone: (718) 218-4523

Fax: (501) 633-3476

Email (no spaces):

info @ wetlands-preserve.org

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- Attend protests against the groundless arrests and abuse of hundreds of activists in Brussels. Visit our [online calendar](#) or subscribe to our email events announcement list [Wetlands-Activism](#).

- Volunteer with our Belgium Solidarity Campaign to support Marianne and her fellow arrestees. Call Adam at (718) 880-7979 or email adam@wetlands-preserve.org to get involved.

- If you live outside the New York metropolitan area organize a protest at a Belgian consulate, embassy, UN office, Belgian Tourist Office, or US State Department building. Call (718) 880-7979 or email Belgiumsolidarity@mail.com for details and additional resources.

- Call Belgium's US Ambassador, H.E. Jan Matthysen at (202) 333-6900 and Belgium's Ambassador to the United Nations Jan K.F. Grauls (212) 378-6300 to demand the immediate release of all prisoners and express your outrage at the torture, abuse, and unjust incarceration of Marianne and others.

- Call the Belgian National Tourist Office at (212) 758-8130. Let them know you'll be canceling your plans to vacation in Belgium because you no longer feel that Belgium is a safe tourist destination for US citizens based on this torture incident.

StopPeruFTA.org

TradeJustice.net

Foodnotfur.org

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