Union Home Minister
Amit Shah
Ministry of Home Affairs
North Block, New Delhi – 110001
**INDIEN**

**BK 16**

Dear Minister

Between 2018 and 2021, the Pune city police and the National Investigation Agency of India counter-terrorism unit arrested 16 poets, journalists, lawyers, professors, artists and a Jesuit priest. All of them had worked tirelessly for the rights of marginalised population groups, including Dalits and Adivasis.The charges against the detainees are vague and unfounded. They were based on various provisions of the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Indian Penal Code.

Please ensure that Sudha Bharadwaj, Arun Ferreira, Surendra Gadling, Mahesh Raut, Shoma Sen, Rona Wilson, Sudhir Dhawale, Vernon Gonsalves, Varavara Rao, Gautam Navlakha, Anand Teltumbde, Hany Babu, Sagar Tatyarao Gorkhe, Ramesh Murlidhar Gaichor and Jyoti Raghoba Jagtab are released immediately and unconditionally and all charges against them are dropped. The activists must be allowed to peacefully exercise their rights to freedom of expression and association. Repeal all laws that criminalise or impose arbitrary or blanket restrictions on the human right to freedom of expression and bring Indian laws in line with international human rights standards.

Sincerely