



# AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

**Remembering those experiencing injustice,  
A time for contemplation.....**

**July 2021**

**“Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners. And those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering.” Hebrews: 13:3**

*A special time is usually set aside in Bishop Alcock’s Chapel on the first Sunday of each month from 9.00 - 10.15am. Here we hold in mind or pray for the people whose cases are highlighted for the current month.*

*Though we cannot gather in person due to present circumstances, we invite you to remember the cases here and any others for whom you have a particular concern.*

## **BELARUS: Journalist facing torture**

Exiled Belarusian journalist and government critic, Raman Pratasevich, was unlawfully arrested on 23 May by the Belarusian authorities along with his partner Sofia Sapega, a Russian national. Their Athens-Vilnius flight was forced to land in Minsk under false pretext. Raman Pratasevich was wanted by the Belarusian authorities on trumped-up 'terrorism' charges for his journalistic work. If convicted, Raman Pratasevich is facing up to 20 years' imprisonment. A televised 'confession' may indicate torture and other ill-treatment. Amnesty International has documented widespread use of torture and other ill-treatment in Belarus, violations of the right to a fair trial, and arbitrary prosecution of peaceful protesters and independent journalists.

*Please hold in mind or pray:*

- For the immediate release of Raman Pratasevich, Sofia Sapega and all those who have been arbitrarily detained and imprisoned in Belarus for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly
- For the Belarus authorities to protect Raman Pratasevich and Sofia Sapega from ill-treatment and allow them immediate access to a lawyer of their choice.

## **SAUDI ARABIA: Red Crescent worker sentenced**

On 12 March 2018 state security forces arrested Abdulrahman al-Sadhan from his place of work at the Red Crescent Society in Riyadh. They failed to present a warrant, confiscated his phone, and took him to an unknown location. After almost two years Abdulrahman was finally allowed to call his family for the first time. On 5 April 2021, Abdulrahman was sentenced by the Specialized Criminal Court to 20 years in prison, followed by a 20-year travel ban, on charges relating to the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression. His trial was marred by violations, including possible torture used to extract a confession. On 4 May, Abdulrahman appealed his sentence. He continues to be denied phone calls and visits from his family.

*Please hold in mind or pray:*

- For Abdulrahman al-Sadhan to be released immediately and unconditionally
- For the Saudi authorities to order an independent and effective investigation into Abdulrahman's two-year enforced disappearance and his claims before the court that he was tortured and otherwise ill-treated
- For Abdulrahman to be allowed regular contact with his family.

## **QATAR: Migrant workers and the World Cup**

FIFA is making huge profits from the World Cup, while migrant workers are suffering to make it possible. They face forced labour, unpaid wages, excessive working hours, and even physical and verbal abuse. In recent years Qatar has introduced a series of major reforms to improve migrant workers' rights. The authorities have promised better pay and access to justice for abuse – but migrant workers still don't have the right to join a union, and many other rights. In 2020 Amnesty International documented 100 migrant workers working on a World Cup stadium for up to 7 months without being paid. FIFA has a clear responsibility to act when workers on World Cup projects are being exploited. FIFA must also publicly call on Qatar to urgently implement reforms so that those contributing so much to the World Cup can fulfil their own dreams of a decent life for themselves and their loved ones.

*Please hold in mind or pray:*

- For FIFA to take a clear public stand to ensure that Qatar properly protects the human rights of migrant workers delivering the World Cup experience, including those in the service sector
- For FIFA to properly investigate whether labour abuse is taking place on World Cup related sites, act quickly to stop it and remediate any harm caused
- For FIFA to guarantee that human rights criteria will be included in all future FIFA tournaments.

### **Good News!**

In April Egyptian journalists Solafa Magdy and her husband Hossam Al-Sayyad were released from jail and reunited with their families. The couple were arrested in November 2019 and accused of spreading false news and joining a banned group. Sofala was awarded the 2020 Courage in Journalism Award. She specialises in minority and women's rights, refugees and sexual harassment. She was repeatedly physically and sexually assaulted while in prison. In Egypt political prisoners are routinely tortured and denied medical care as punishment for their views.

**Sources for cases:** Amnesty International

'I pray for all of us, oppressor and friend, that together we may succeed in building a better world, through human understanding and love, and that in doing so we may reduce the pain and suffering of all sentient beings.'

**Dalai Lama XIV**

*"To clasp one's hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world."*

Please keep this sheet to hand and use it in prayer or meditation, and any action you feel and find possible.

Your local Amnesty group can be contacted at [www.amnestyelycity.org.uk](http://www.amnestyelycity.org.uk)

## ELY AMNESTY NEWS

On 3 July we will have a stall in the Ely Saturday market. Do join us anytime between 8.30am and 3.00pm.

On Saturday 14 August, we will be holding a relaxed afternoon of country/rock as a fund-raiser for Amnesty in the gardens of Haddenham Arts Centre. Tickets are available from HAC, Burrows Newsagents, 1a High Street, Ely or <http://www.wegotickets.com/event/515642>. Advance adult tickets are £12 and accompanied under 16s £6. On the gate, if available, £15/£8.

If you are interested in what we do, or would like to find out ways that you can continue to support Amnesty from home, then please feel free to get in touch with us through the above website.