



# AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

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

**October 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**

*Once again, a special time has been set aside in Bishop Alcock’s Chapel between the two morning services on the first Sunday of each month from 9.00am to 10.15am. Here we can hold in mind or pray for the people whose cases are highlighted for the current month. This meditation is open to those of all faiths and none. .*

## **Papua New Guinea: Executions resume**

Papua New Guinea has not carried out an execution since 1954. In fact, the death penalty was abolished there in 1970 and although it was resumed in 1991, no one has so far been executed. Currently 15 people are on death row. A Supreme Court ruling on 30 July paved the way for executions to resume. The country's parliament expanded the scope of the death penalty to include sorcery related murder, aggravated rape and robbery. The country has resisted international resolutions calling on a moratorium on the death penalty. Amnesty International points out there is no good evidence that the death penalty is an effective deterrent against crime.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the people on Papua New Guinea's death row
- For the country not to resume executions
- For it to join the growing number of countries around the world which have banned the death penalty

## **China: Jailed journalist continues hunger strikes**

Zhang Zhan is a citizen journalist who was jailed after she spent several months reporting from Wuhan as the Covid-19 outbreak spread last year. She shared details of the harassment of victims' families and the detention of other independent journalists. Citizen journalists were the primary source of uncensored information from Wuhan. First detained in May 2020, she has held numerous hunger strikes to protest against her detention. In December, she was jailed for four years for "picking quarrels and provoking troubles". She is now suffering from extreme malnutrition, weighing just over six stone. The prison authorities have forcibly fed Zhang Zhan through a tube, as well as shackling her for three months as punishment for her actions. She has been admitted to hospital but refuses to give up her partial hunger strike as a way of asserting her innocence and protesting against her sentence.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For Zhang Zhan as she continues to suffer during her incarceration
- For the Chinese authorities to allow her access to her family and to legal representation
- For the Chinese authorities to prevent her future torture and ill-treatment and to allow a free press

## **Pegasus: Weapon of mass surveillance**

Heads of state, activists, lawyers and journalists have all been targeted by repressive governments using a powerful hacking software sold by Israeli surveillance firm NSO Group. Activists include the family of the Saudi dissident Jamal Khashoggi in the days before he was murdered and Moroccan academic and human right activist Maati Monjib; heads of state include France's Emmanuel Macron of France, Pakistan's Imran Khan and South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa; journalists include Mexico's Cecilio Pineda a few weeks before his killing, Financial Times editor Roula Khalaf and at least 40 journalists from nearly every major media outlet in India. Activist and author Arundhati Roy said it was like "having your own brain, including its inaccessible recesses, informing on you". Its use is an assault on human rights, undermining democratic rights, activism, fair legal representation and the freedom of the press.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the physical and psychological wellbeing of all those who discovered they were targeted
- For international collaboration to demand greater controls on the spyware

### **Good News!**

Following action by over 35,000 Amnesty supporters, the Egyptian authorities have lifted an asset freeze and travel ban on the lawyer and women's rights activist Azza Soliman which has lasted since 2016. Azza founded the Centre for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance. She has defended victims of torture, arbitrary detention, domestic violence, and rape. The authorities labelled her a "spy" and a "threat" to national security; she had been harassed and put under surveillance. The news comes as a number of political prisoners have been released from jail in Egypt.

**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

Our monthly planning meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month. We are now meeting cautiously in person. The next two meetings will be held from 7pm on 5th October and 2nd November in St Peter's House, Broad Street, Ely, CB7 4AH. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Our next event will be the annual Ben Jupp Lecture on 24 October at 6.30pm. Geraldine Van Bueren QC, an international human rights lawyer and professor emerita at Queen Mary, University of London, will talk on '*Children's Rights – New Global Challenges*'. Because of the ongoing pandemic, it is not yet clear whether this will take place face to face in the Cathedral or on Zoom. Watch for announcements on our website and that of Ely Cathedral.