



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

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

March 2022

“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.

Taiwan – on death row for 33 years

Chiou Ho-shun was convicted and sentenced to death in 1989. He was one of 12 men accused of murdering insurer Ko Hung Yu-lan and kidnapping a schoolchild. Their convictions, after an unfair trial, were based solely on their ‘confessions’, obtained after they had been held incommunicado by police for four months. They claimed to have been tortured and retracted their confessions. Only Chiou was sentenced to death; his co-defendants received prison sentences. On an 11th retrial in 2011 the judge told Chiou that his sentence would be commuted if he pleaded guilty. Chiou rejected the offer. His co-defendants have all completed their prison terms, apart from one who died in prison. To date, Amnesty’s campaign for Chiou has received more than 42,700 actions worldwide.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For Chiou Ho-Shun who has spent over half his life on death row
- For the President of Taiwan to address the issues of unfair trials in Chiou’s case and to accept his pardon applications
- For Chiou to be released immediately because of the time already served in prison

Russia – human rights lawyer’s mother detained

In December 2021, human rights lawyer Abubakar Yangulbaev reported that 21 of his relatives in Chechnya were abducted by members of local authorities, placed in secret detention and subjected to ill-treatment and threats – alongside dozens of members of other families, mostly relatives of exiled critics of the Chechen authorities. Most have now been released. On 20 January his mother, Zarema Musaeva, was abducted from her apartment by seven men. Later, Chechen authorities confirmed she was in their custody but refused to allow a lawyer to see her. On 2 February media reported that she had been detained on remand for using violence against a police officer, a crime punishable by up to 10 years’ imprisonment.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the immediate release of Zarema Musaeva, who has committed no crime and is unlawfully deprived of her liberty
- For the circumstances of her abduction and unlawful detention to be investigated and those responsible held accountable in fair trial proceedings
- For the Chechen authorities to cease persecuting critics and human rights activists and their families

Israel – denying homes to Palestinians

Mohammed Al-Rajabi is from Silwan, a village on the outskirts of the Old City of Jerusalem. Mohammed had lived in his home for just two months when it was demolished by Israeli authorities. Palestinian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem are particularly targeted by settler organisations which, with the full backing of the Israeli authorities, work to displace Palestinian families and hand their homes to settlers. Palestinians are also routinely denied permits to build homes, seemingly because they're Palestinian, and then when they do, they face eviction or having that home demolished. Today at least 150,000 Palestinians are at risk of losing their homes.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Israeli authorities to immediately end the forced eviction of Palestinians and the demolition of Palestinian homes.
- For the Israeli authorities to create fairer property and planning laws, policies and practices that do not oppress Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Good news:

The Saudi Arabian Specialized Criminal Court has commuted the death sentences of Ali al-Nimr, Abdullah al-Zaher and Dawood al-Marhoon, who were arrested as teenagers for offences committed while participating in anti-government protests. They were convicted after unfair trials and re-sentenced to 10-year prison terms inclusive of time served. This means that all three have now been released.

Three students who were sentenced to 10 years in prison for sharing a joke that mentioned Boko Haram were freed in December after the Supreme Court of Cameroon reduced their sentences to five years. Their case was featured in the 2016 Amnesty Write for Rights and more than 300,000 AI supporters demanded their release.

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.amnestycity.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 1st March and 5th April in St Peter's House, Broad Street, Ely, CB7 4AH. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Our next event will be a screening of the BAFTA-nominated film *The Mauritanian*, directed by Kevin Macdonald and based on the *NY Times* best-selling memoir 'Guantánamo Diary' by Mohamedou Ould Slahi, at the Maltings cinema, Ely, on Wednesday 30 March at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10, booking through Babylon Arts: https://www.babylonarts.org.uk/cinema/view,the-mauritanian-15_22927.htm