



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

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

March 2025

“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 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.

IRAN: Kurdish dissident sentenced to death

Verisheh (Wrishe) Moradi, from Iran's oppressed Kurdish ethnic minority and a member of the group East Kurdistan Free Woman Society (known by the acronym KJAR), is at risk of execution after Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran sentenced her to death in early November 2024 following a grossly unfair trial. She was convicted of 'armed rebellion against the state'. Her appeal is pending before the Supreme Court. She was arrested in August 2023, subjected to forced disappearance for four months, torture and other ill-treatment. In December she was transferred to Evin prison; the courts banned both her and her lawyer from presenting a defence at trial. She has been denied access to adequate health care and severely limited from contact with her family.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Iranian authorities to halt any plans to execute Verisheh Moradi and quash her conviction and death sentence
- For the authorities, pending her release, to provide her with appropriate health care, allow regular visits from her family and lawyers and protect her from ill-treatment
- For the authorities to set up an impartial investigation into her torture allegations

UGANDA: Human rights lawyer convicted by military court

Eron Kiiza is a human rights lawyer and heads the Environment Shield Limited, a grassroot NGO specialising in climate, natural resources and environmental justice. He was one of the lawyers representing Dr Kizza Besigye, a Ugandan opposition politician and former presidential candidate for the Forum for Democratic Change political party, who was abducted in Nairobi, Kenya, in November 2024. On 7 January 2025 during a court session, soldiers physically prevented Eron Kiiza from entering the military court's section for defendants' lawyers. Eron responded by shouting and banging on the courtroom barricade. Soldiers assaulted him while removing him from the courtroom, before arresting and placing him in the dock alongside his clients. The court later on the same day convicted him of 'contempt of court' and sentenced him to nine months imprisonment without a fair trial.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Ugandan authorities to stop trying civilians in military courts, stop targeting lawyers simply for doing their job and immediately release Eron Kiiza
- For the Ugandan authorities to ensure that Eron is not being ill-treated in prison – it seems that he had lost an extensive amount of weight within less than two weeks and had bruises on his arms and legs

EGYPT: Unjustly detained rights lawyer referred to trial

Ibrahim Metwaly is a lawyer and co-founder of the Families of the Disappeared in Egypt group. He co-founded the group after his son, Amr, was forcibly disappeared on 8 July 2013. He searched for his son in police stations, prisons, hospitals and morgues with no success. Amr remains subjected to enforced disappearance, but the family stopped searching for him after the arrest of Ibrahim Metwaly out of fear of further reprisals. Security forces arrested Ibrahim on 10 September 2017 from Cairo International Airport while on his way to Geneva to address the UN. Since September 2024, he has been referred to two separate trials on similar bogus charges. He is held in Badr 3 prison, where he is being denied urgent healthcare. While Egyptian law imposes a maximum two-year pretrial detention period, this is routinely bypassed in cases involving state critics and political opponents through a practice known as 'rotation', with new cases being opened against him.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Egyptian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Ibrahim as he is being held solely due to his exercise of his human rights, including seeking justice for his son
- For the authorities to improve the appalling conditions in Badr 3, where prisoners are restricted from access to basic necessities, such as food and clothing, regular contact with family and lawyers and adequate healthcare

Good news

A Saudi PhD student at the University of Leeds has been released from prison in Saudi Arabia. Salma al-Shahab was arrested in 2021 while on holiday. She was later jailed by a terrorism tribunal for six years for 'disturbing public order' and 'destabilising the social fabric' over posts calling for reforms and activists' release. Her sentence was then increased to 34 years, before being reduced twice on appeal, first to 27 years and then to four years with an additional four years suspended. Amnesty International said her 'crime' was no more than 'posting tweets in support of women's rights'. However, she is still subject to a travel ban and so unable to return to her studies at Leeds.

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

ELY AMNESTY NEWS

Our monthly planning meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month. Our next two meetings will be held from 7pm on 4 March and 1 April in St Peter's House, Broad Street, Ely, CB7 4AH. Anyone interested in attending to find out more or join our group would be very welcome.