

Action By Christians Against Torture

Christmas Greetings Campaign 2017-18

For this campaign we suggest that you write a simple card or greeting to the individual saying, for instance, that you are thinking of him/her and/or perhaps urging them not to lose hope (or words to that effect). A picture postcard is always welcome and cheapest to send. You can include your name and address (if you wish) but do not mention ACAT or include a religious greeting if so advised, as communication from a foreign organisation can endanger the prisoner and lead to harsher sentences. Several individuals featured in our last Christmas Campaign have been released. Sadly others are still in prison and it is important not to forget them. As usual, we include a selection of human rights groups.

GROUPS



UNITED FOR IRAN is an independent non-profit US-based group working for civil liberties in Iran. They aim to improve human rights conditions there, increase the capacity of civil society, and engage citizens through technology. Activities include a Prison Atlas of Iran with 2000+ records and they run campaigns to put pressure on Iran to spare lives, release prisoners and stop unjust prosecutions.

United for Iran does not publicise a physical address but internet users are invited to contact them and "like" them on Facebook: www.facebook.com/United4IranFB/.



KHPG assists individuals in the Ukraine whose rights have been infringed. It monitors and investigates human rights violations and also promotes education and legal awareness in the country. Monitoring human rights in the Ukraine

since 1995, it has around 50 members and renders free legal aid to more than 200 victims of torture and ill-treatment each year. Please send your greeting to:

KHPG

27 Ivanova St., Apt. 4, 61002, Kharkiv, Ukraine

or to:

POB 10430, 61002 Kharkiv

Ukraine

Email: khpg@ukr.net

Website: <http://khpg.org/en/>.



THE TASK FORCE DETAINEES OF THE PHILIPPINES (TFDP) is a non-profit, national organization which

documents human rights violations, assists victims and their families in their material and legal needs, and conducts human rights education work. Formed in 1974 by the Association of Major Religious

Superiors in the Philippines, TFDP runs campaigns against torture and for the release of political prisoners. Send a simple message, sign your name and give your address.

National Center (TFDP)

45 Saint Mary Street

Cubao

Quezon City

Manila

The Philippines

Email on website: <http://www.tfdp.net/about-us/staff-directory>.



The **COMISSÃO PASTORAL DA TERRA (CPT)** or Pastoral Land Commission was founded in 1975 by bishops and prelates of the Amazon during a military dictatorship in order to respond to the needs of indigenous rural workers in Brazil who were exploited as slave labour and expelled from the lands they occupied. Now

ecumenically orientated, it helps with land disputes and works with those released from slavery on cattle ranches and in charcoal and logging businesses. Send a simple message, sign your name and give your address.

Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT)

Secretaria Nacional

Rua 19, nº 35, 1º andar, Edifício Dom Abel

Centro - Goiânia

Goiás

CEP 74030-090, Brazil

Email: comunicacao@cptnacional.org.br OR cpt@cptnacional.org.br

Website: www.cptnacional.org.br.



LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS & LEGAL AID (LHRLA)

meets the demands of those who cannot afford the expenses of litigation, mainly large numbers of destitute women and children, in Pakistan. It provides resources for preventive and remedial legal help to combat child abuse, trafficking in children and women, and sexual harassment. An offshoot of LHRLA is

Madadgaar, Pakistan's first helpline for women and children experiencing violence, abuse and exploitation, illegal detention, rape and torture. LHRLA takes on all human rights violation cases, including the dissolution of marriage and child custody arrangements, and works for reform of the juvenile justice system and prisons. Send a simple, non-religious message, sign your name and give your address.

LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS & LEGAL AID (LHRLA)

Opp. Sindh Assembly Building, Court Road, Karachi-74200, Pakistan.

Email: lhrla@fascom.com OR madadgaar@cyber.net.pk.



Comunicado de Prensa

Founded by Jesuits in 1988 the **CENTRO DE DERECHOS HUMANOS MIGUEL AGUSTÍN PRO JUÁREZ** defends and promotes respect for human rights in Mexico. It has achieved the liberation of numerous prisoners of conscience through the successful legal defence of emblematic cases of human rights violations, including

torture, arbitrary detention, and fabrication of evidence. Alongside working for reforms in Mexico's judicial and security system, it assists vulnerable communities in defending their land rights. Members receive constant death threats. Send a simple message, sign your name and give your address.

Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez

Serapio Rendón 57-B

Col. San Rafael, México D.F.

Mexico

<http://www.centroprodh.org.mx>



The **Comité De Familiares De Detenidos Desaparecidos En Honduras (COFADEH)** or Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras was founded in 1982 and is one of the country's main human rights organizations. Its symbol is a dove. As well as keeping alive the memory of victims of the enforced disappearances of the 1980s it seeks justice for current human rights abuses and combats the culture of silence and impunity behind which perpetrators hide. Its workers are at risk of harassment and violence, receive death threats, and female members have been threatened with sexual violence. Send a simple message, sign your name and give your address.

Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras (COFADEH)

Barrio la Plazuela

avenida Cervantes, casa 1301

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Email: cofadeh@sdnhon.org.hn, website: www.cofadeh.org.



WOZA

WOZA (Women of Zimbabwe Arise) is an Ndebele word meaning "come forward". With a current membership of over 75,000 women and men, WOZA

was formed in 2003 as a non-violent civic movement to provide women with a united voice to speak out on issues affecting their day-to-day lives, originally in the face of harassment, arrest and beatings by the police. Since 2003 over 3,000 women and men have spent time in police custody, many more than once and most for 48 hours or more. They continue to endure beatings and unbearable conditions in prison cells in their efforts to exercise their constitutional rights and fundamental freedoms. Send a simple message, sign your name and give your address.

WOZA

P.O. Box FM 701, Famona

Bulawayo

Zimbabwe

Email: peoplescharter@wozazimbabwe.org

Website: www.wozazimbabwe.org.



B'TSELEM, the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, was established in 1989 by a group of prominent academics, attorneys, journalists, and Knesset members. It endeavours to document and educate the Israeli public and policymakers about human rights violations in the Occupied Territories, combat the phenomenon of denial prevalent among the Israeli public, and help create a human rights culture in Israel. B'Tselem in Hebrew means "in the image of" and is based on Genesis 1:27: "And God created human beings in his image". It is also used as a synonym for human dignity. Send a simple, non-religious message, sign your name and give your address.

B'Tselem

P.O. Box 53132

Jerusalem 9153002, Israel

Email: mail@btselem.org

Website: www.btselem.org.



The **Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR)** is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, registered with the Bahraini Ministry of Labour and Social Services since July 2002. Despite an order by the Bahraini authorities in November 2004 to close, the BCHR is still functioning after gaining wide local and international support for its struggle to promote human rights in Bahrain. Send a simple, non-religious message, sign your name and give your address.

International Office BCHR

Dronningensgade 14, 1420 København K, Denmark

Website: www.bahrainrights.org.

INDIVIDUALS



Bakhrom Kholmatov, Tajikistan

As part of a harassment campaign of his local Protestant Church group, Bakhrom Kholmatov was arrested and sentenced in July 2017 to three years in prison for "extremism". Church members have been beaten and insulted and informed that the intention is to close down churches in Tajikistan and confiscate their buildings. Bakhrom's family have been threatened and ordered to remain silent about the case, the court and his condition in prison. Please

send a non-religious card or greeting to the following. Do not mention ACAT.

Tyurma Yavan
Ulitsa Shamsova
735 Yavan
Khatlon Oblast
Tajikistan



Hadi Asgari and Amin Afshar Naderi, Iran

Christians Hadi Asgari and Amin Afshar Naderi, were arrested in August 2016 and sentenced in July 2017 to 10 years imprisonment for "violating national security and promoting Christianity" (Amin received an extra 5 years for blasphemy). During detention both went on hunger strike. Amin became seriously ill in solitary confinement for 3 months and Hadi suffered from an untreated kidney infection. Others arrested have been released after paying up to \$30,000-\$60,000

dollars and many Christians have their assets seized after being pressurised to leave the country. Send a (non-religious) greeting/card to the prisoners at the address below. Do not mention ACAT or any other foreign organisation.

Evin Prison
Saadat Abad
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran



Yang Hua (aka Li Guozhi), China.

When Yang Hua's wife, Wang Hongwu, came to pick him up on 20 December 2015, from the detention centre in China where he had been held since 9 December for his involvement with the Living Stone Church (also known as Huoshi Church), she

witnessed him being thrown into an unmarked van. He is a third-generation pastor and has been detained before. His father was gaoled in the late 1960s for his Christian faith and the authorities continue to pressure the church to join the government-sanctioned Three-Self Movement or face destruction. Members are monitored, interrogated, and prohibited from attending prayer groups. In January 2016 he was accused of "divulging state secrets" but given no trial date. When finally allowed to visit him, his family and lawyer observed his poor health and harsh treatment. More recently Yang Hua reported that government prosecutors have threatened his life, along with those of his wife and children, and stomped on his feet in an effort to force his cooperation. One of the prosecutors told him, "I am a torture expert. I know how to beat you up without leaving a mark on your body for people to see. Doctors won't be able to diagnose you. Even you won't know what you died of". Please send a (non-religious) card with your name and address if you wish but do not mention ACAT.

Li Guozhi

#1-3 North

Nanming Detention House

Wangchengpo, Chaoyangdong Road

Guiyang City, Guizhou Province

People's Republic of China



Ebrahim Firouzi, Iran

A Christian convert from Islam, Ebrahim Firouzi has been in and out of prison in Iran since 2011, and although he was due to be released in January 2015, authorities retried him and extended his sentence by five years. He was first arrested in January 2011. After interrogation and incommunicado detention for 154 days, he was conditionally released, which in Iran means that the authorities can re-arrest you at any time to complete your sentence. In March 2013 he was arrested again and held for 53 days. On 13 July 2013 a court sentenced him to one year in prison following two years of exile for propagandizing against the Islamic regime of Iran, organizing evangelistic activities, contacting foreigners and anti-Islamic revolutionary networks, and administering a Christian website. In August 2013 while on short leave from prison Ebrahim was arrested once more and accused of spying. He was held in Evin Prison in Tehran until October 2014 before transfer to Rajai Shahr Prison near Karaj. Due for release on 13 January 2015, he was kept in detention, retried in March 2015 and charged with "acting against national security, gathering, and collusion". He was sentenced to five years in prison. Send a card (non-religious), with your name and address if you wish, but do not mention ACAT.

Ebrahim Firouzi

Rajai Shahr Prison

Karaj City, Albourz State

Iran



Dr. Kiflu Gebremeskel, Eritrea

Dr. Kiflu Gebremeskel, a leading figure of the Full Gospel Church of Eritrea, was arrested on 23 May 2004 at his home in Asmara Gejeret. Dr. Gebremeskel was a mathematics lecturer and department and faculty head at the University of Asmara until 1999, when he became a full-time pastor at the Southwest Full Gospel Church. His wife and four children have not been able to visit him. About 2,000 Eritrean Christians are believed to be under arrest because of their religious beliefs, being held in police stations, military

camps and prisons in 12 known locations across Eritrea, although some were released after signing a pledge to stop attending religious services. The Eritrean government began forcibly closing evangelical Protestant churches in 2002. It has not allowed any of the independent Protestant churches to register and reopen, even though 11 have applied to do so. Dr. Gebremeskel is one of 28 clergymen in detention, including Kidane Weldou (see below) and Haile Nayzgi. Gaoled Protestants are routinely subjected to physical beatings and severe psychological pressure to deny their religious beliefs. Police and military authorities continue to demand the prisoners return to one of the three Christian denominations recognized by the government — the nation's historic Orthodox, Catholic and Lutheran churches — although even these have incurred government disfavour, experiencing threats from police and security and imprisonment of members. Send a card (non-religious) with your name and address if you wish. Do not mention ACAT.

Dr. Kiflu Gebremeskel

Karsheli Prison

2nd Police Station Zone 7 Northern East

Zoba Maakel

Asmara, Eritrea



Pastor Kidane Weldou, Eritrea

Pastor Kidane Weldou disappeared in 2005 and is presumably detained by Eritrean security forces in Karsheli prison. He is a senior pastor of the Full Gospel Church and has been a leader in the church for many years. For several days his family, including wife and four daughters, were unable to learn of his whereabouts. Pastor Weldou is also a member of the executive committee of Gideons International in Eritrea. On 19 February 2005 a group of Sunday school teachers and students were arrested and detained by police after a raid on the Medhane Alem Orthodox Church in Asmara. They were later released. According to Compass Direct the pastors of the banned Protestant churches were ordered not to inform anyone outside Eritrea of their problems. These pastors rejected this advice and reported what was happening to the outside world. Some of those arrested were being held in metal shipping containers. Please send a card

(non-religious). You may include your name and address if you wish but do not mention ACAT.

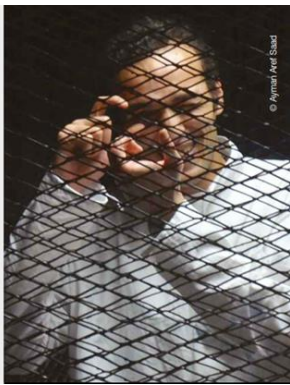
Kidane Weldou

Karsheli Prison

2nd Police Station Zone 7 Northern East

Zoba Maakel

Asmara, Eritrea



Mahmoud Abu Zeid (Shawkan), Egypt

Photojournalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid (aka Shawkan), was covering a sit-in on 14 August 2013 in Cairo when security forces, police and tanks swept in, using bullets and tear gas. When the police found out Shawkan was a journalist, they arrested him, tied his hands together with plastic cables that cut through his skin, and beat him. Up to a thousand people

were killed on that day across Egypt and Shawkan was among hundreds arrested. He has now been detained without charge for over three years, in contravention of Egyptian law. He has hepatitis C but has been denied adequate medication and his health is deteriorating. Shawkan faces nine trumped-up charges, including "joining a criminal gang" and "murder". If convicted he could face the death penalty. Please send a card (it can be religious and you can mention ACAT) to:

Free Shawkan

c/o Ahmed Abu Seif

211 E. Ohio St. Apt #2523

Chicago, Illinois

60611, USA



Johan Teterissa, Indonesia. Teacher Johan Teterissa is serving a 15-year jail sentence for raising a flag banned by the Indonesian government. In 2007 he led a group of people, mainly teachers and farmers, in a peaceful protest in front of the president. They performed a traditional war dance, before unfurling a "rainbow" flag, a historical symbol of independence for the eastern province of Maluku. Police officers removed Johan and the others, punching and beating them. They forced them to crawl on their stomachs on hot asphalt, whipped them with electric cables, and beat their ears with rifle butts until they bled. After an unfair trial, the protestors were convicted of "rebellion" and Johan was sentenced to life, later reduced to 15 years. He is in prison thousands of kilometres away from his family and friends. Please send a non-religious card. You can mention ACAT and include your name and address.

Johan Teterissa

Lembaga Pemasyarakatan (Lapas)

Klas 1 Batu

Nusa Lambangan, Tambakreja

Cilacap Selatan

53213, Cilacap

Central Java, Indonesia



Annie Alfred, Malawi

Annie Alfred lives with her parents and has many friends, but her life is in constant danger because, alongside 7,000-10,000

Malawians, she has the genetic condition of albinism. They are in

danger of being abducted, mutilated or killed because of erroneous beliefs and superstitions, with children like Annie at particular risk. Even after death their bones are often stolen for use in witchcraft rituals. Attacks against Malawians with albinism are rising and there have been six reported killings in 2016. The few perpetrators who have been arrested have been acquitted or given light sentences. The president says he supports greater protection for people with albinism, but little progress has been made. Please send a card (it can be religious). You can mention

ACAT. [APAM will distribute the cards to people with albinism and families who have lost loved ones.]

Association of People with Albinism in Malawi (APAM)

c/o FEDOMA

Private Bag 797

Limbe, Blantyre

Malawi



Lahpai Gam, Myanmar (Burma)

Lahpai Gam is a Kachin farmer, who was arrested in June 2012 by the military-backed government in Burma. He was charged under Article 17/1 of the Unlawful Association Act, and he is serving a 21 year prison sentence in Myitkyina Prison. Lahpai Gam was living in a

refugee camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) with his family after fleeing from conflict areas in Northern Burma. To support his family he requested permission from a camp supervisor to work as a herdsman outside the camp. While taking a lunch break during the trip, he and his friends were taken by the Burmese Army 37th battalion for questioning. He was eventually accused of being a soldier from the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), and carrying out bombing operations near Myitkyina. The KIA is the armed wing of the Kachin Independence Organisation, which works for democracy and more autonomy for the Kachin people. He was brutally tortured and forced to make a false confession about his connection with the KIA and different bombings in the area. According to family members, during the interrogations he was repeatedly kicked, beaten, forced to drink water mixed with fuel, and was forced to have sexual intercourse with another male prisoner.

Please write or send a (non-religious) card to. You may include your name and address but do not mention ACAT.

Lahpai Gam
C/o The governor of Myitkyina Prison
Myitkyina Prison
Myitkyina Town
Kachin State
Myanmar

Gong Shengliang, China

Gong Shengliang is a Christian pastor in poor health in prison, where over the past years he has received countless beatings. In the 1980s, he founded and led a Protestant evangelical community which has grown in China. Arrested in 2001, he was subsequently sentenced at an unfair trial, based on a confession obtained under torture, then seriously wounded in the face after being beaten by a fellow prisoner. Following one such assault he became deaf in his right ear. Since suffering a stroke in detention in 2012, he has lost the use of his legs. He can no longer speak nor swallow and is denied proper medical care. Current news is hard to come by. Please send a simple (non-religious) message of greeting. Do not mention ACAT.

Gong Shengliang
Prison Hongshan
Province de Hubei Wuhan 430223, People's Republic of China



Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, Iran

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe was featured in the September/November 2016 Newsletter and in subsequent updates, in which we have focussed on urging the UK government to help her. In view of threats to extend her imprisonment, you are invited to send a card to Nazanin herself.

The card can be religious and can include your name, address and information about yourself. Do not mention ACAT. It is not known whether she will be allowed to receive it, but her family asks that you send one.

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe
Evin Prison
District 2
Behesht St
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran



Linda Carty, USA

Linda Anita Carty, who has dual US and UK nationality, was convicted and sentenced to death in February 2002 for the abduction and murder of 25-year-old Joana Rodriguez in order to steal her new-born son. The trial was

characterised by an incompetent lawyer and prosecutorial misconduct. She has been on death row in Texas for 16 years. In 2011 the Supreme Court refused to hear her case but in October 2017 a Texas court granted her a rare evidentiary hearing to examine evidence uncovered by Reprieve that the key witnesses at her original trial lied after being threatened by the prosecution. This means that Linda may finally get a new trial and the justice she deserves. Send a greetings card and/or message of support, religious if you wish. You can also include your name and address.

Mountainview Unit
2305 Ramson Road
Gatesville
Texas 76528
U.S.A