



Action
by
Christians
against
torture

*All that is required
for the triumph of evil
is that good men
do nothing*

Christmas Greetings Campaign
ADVENT 2016

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 but do not mention ACAT (unless otherwise advised below) as this can endanger the prisoner.

Zaw Zaw Latt and Pwint Phyu Latt, Myanmar (Burma)



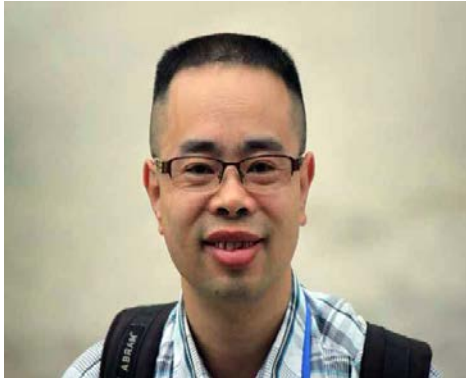
When Aung San Suu Kyi ordered the release of 100 political prisoners in August this year, human rights defenders Zaw Zaw Latt and Pwint Phyu Latt were among the 100 who remained in prison in Myanmar (Burma). They were arrested in July 2015 and sentenced to four years in prison with hard labour on trumped up charges. They

are Muslim campaigners and members of Thint Myat Lo Thu Myar (Peace Seekers and Multiculturalist Movement), an interfaith foundation founded by a Buddhist monk. The authorities detained Zaw Zaw Latt following a campaign by Buddhist nationalists on social media demanding his arrest for insulting their religion by encouraging interfaith "mating" and working with a "Buddhist monk who betrays Buddhism." His colleague Pwint Phyu Latt was arrested soon after. Both were told that they were detained for visiting the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) as part of their interfaith trip and for allegedly illegally crossing into India. They were charged under 17(1) of the Unlawful Association Act and the 1947 Burma Immigration Act. On 26 February 2016 they were sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labour under the Immigration Act, increased on 8 April 2016 by a further two years under the Unlawful Association Act. They are currently in Obo prison in Mandalay.

Send a letter or card (non-religious) to:

Zaw Zaw Latt (use the same address for Pwint Phyu Latt)
c/o The Governor of Obo Prison
Obo Prison
Mandalay
Myanmar

Yang Hua (aka Li Guozhi), China.



Pastor Li Guohzi is known legally as Yang Hua. When his 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 four men from "Detention Management" throw her husband into an unmarked van. Yang Hua serves as a pastor in his

church in the southwestern city of Guiyang. 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.

Yang Hua was transferred to criminal custody on 22 December and his arrest approved in January 2016, when he was accused of "divulging state secrets" but given no trial date. His wife and lawyers were initially denied permission to visit him, but when they were finally allowed they 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 card (non-religious) to:

Li Guozhi
#1-3 North
Nanming Detention House
Attn: Li Guozhi
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 on 11 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 July 13, 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. On 21 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 instead 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.

Please send a card (non-religious) to:

Ebrahim Firouzi
Rajaei-Shahri Prison
Karaj City
Albourz State
Iran

Yklas Kabduakasov, Kazakhstan



Kazakhstan's secret police arrested Yklas Kabduakasov, a 54-year-old Christian convert from Islam, on 14 August 2015. He was arrested after police searched his home and confiscated Christian books. The church where Kabduakasov worships was searched the same day. On 15 August a court in the capital city of Astana ordered him to be held for two months in pre-trial detention for spreading "religious discord." Kabduakasov now faces a criminal case with a possible 5-10 year prison sentence. Christians in Kazakhstan believe that Kabduakasov was targeted for his conversion from Islam and for sharing the gospel with other Muslims. They believe the secret police are using these intimidation tactics because they want to make Kabduakasov an example and send a message to all Kazakhs that they will face a similar fate if they convert to Christianity.

Please send a card (non-religious) to:

Yklas Kabduakasov
Kazakhstan
140000 g. Pavlodar
Severnaya promyshlennaya zona
Uchr. AP-162/3, 4 otryad
Kabduakasovu Yklasu Kairullinovichu

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, 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.

Goaled 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 "official" 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.

Please send a card (non-religious) to:

Dr. Kiflu Gebremeskel
Karsheli Prison
2nd Police Station Zone 7 Northern East
Zoba Maakel
Asmara, Eritrea

Ghada Jamsheer, Bahrain



Women's rights defender Ghada Jamsheer is currently serving combined sentences in Issa Town Detention Centre in Bahrain. Detained on 15 August 2016 at Bahrain's airport on arrival from London, she was sentenced for her criticism on social media of the alleged corruption by the management of the King Hamad hospital, run by the Bahrain ruling family. Her health is deteriorating as she is suffering from rheumatoid arthritis which requires specialized treatment that has been

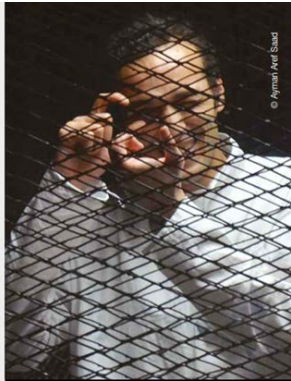
denied to her by prison authorities. While in detention she was seen only once by a general practitioner who recommended referral to a specialist. The authorities have repeatedly rejected this and have failed to provide her with adequate medical care. Ghada Jamsheer has been targeted in the past for her human rights work, and is currently a defendant in a prolonged trial on charges of "assaulting a police officer".

Women comprise nearly one-fifth of the total Bahraini prison population. Of the 20 prisons in the country, Issa Town Detention Centre is the only women's facility. Its total inmate population is approximately 150, with fewer than 10 political detainees. The majority of inmates are migrant workers. Those who do not speak Arabic or English are not provided a translator and cannot understand the charges being brought against them. Health conditions in Bahrain's prisons are also poor, especially with regard to women's health issues. Unclean bathrooms and showers coupled with limited access to toilets contribute to a high number of urinary tract infections. Prisoners must pay for soap and toothbrushes, making basic sanitation products inaccessible to many. The crowded cells also promote the transmission of infectious diseases, including Hepatitis A and B.

Please send a card (non-religious) to:

Ghada Jamsheer
C/o Issa Town Detention Centre
Town postal code area 800
Bahrain

Mahmoud Abu Zeid (Shawkan), Egypt



Photojournalist Mahmoud Abu Zeid, known as 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) 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 to:

Johan Teterissa
Lembaga Pemasyarakatan (Lapas)
Klas 1 Batu
Nusa Lambangan
Tambakreja
Cilacap Selatan
53213, Cilacap
Central Java, Indonesia

Annie Alfred, Malawi



11-year-old 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) to:

Association of People with Albinism in Malawi (APAM)

c/o FEDOMA

Private Bag 797

Limbe, Blantyre

Malawi

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

THE NEXT TWO PAGES GIVE THE ADDRESSES OF ORGANISATIONS THAT WORK TO PROTECT OPPRESSED PEOPLE.

Some of these organisations have previously written back to senders to thank them for their solidarity.

PLEASE SEND A CARD, A RELIGIOUS ONE IF YOU WISH, TO:-

Commissao Pastoral da Terra (CPT), Edificio Dom Abel - 1 andar, Rua 19, No. 35, CEP 7430-090 Centro Goiania, Goias, Brazil



The Church Land Commission began working for the poor and marginalised in the 1960's. It is particularly active in Para State helping and advising those poor indigenous groups involved in land disputes with large landowners. It also works with those released from slave labour on cattle ranches, charcoal and logging businesses. Send a simple message of greeting and support; sign your name and add your

address.

PLEASE SEND A CARD, A *NON -RELIGIOUS* ONE, TO:-

Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid, 702 Mohammadi House, Karachi 74200, Pakistan

Pakistan has the third highest population of enslaved individuals in the world.

SOURCE: GLOBAL SLAVERY INDEX

LHRA was formed in 1989 to provide legal aid to those suffering widespread discrimination and serious violations of human rights among the disadvantaged - women, children, the poor. It also campaigns for prison reform, and takes up issues involving child labour, women's rights and the treatment of children in detention. Its lawyers suffer harassment and threats. Send a simple message of

support, sign your name and add your address.

PLEASE SEND A CARD, A RELIGIOUS CARD IF YOU WISH, TO:-

Centro de Derechos Humanos (PRODH), Serapio Rendon 57- B, Col San Rafael, 06470 Mexico DF, Mexico



PRODH is an independent human rights group, founded by the Jesuits; it plays a very important role in investigating, documenting and defending human rights in Mexico. It also supports and defends human rights lawyers. Members receive constant death threats. Send a simple message of greeting and support; sign your name and add your address.

PLEASE SEND A CARD, A RELIGIOUS CARD IF YOU WISH, TO:-

Comite de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras (COFADEH), Barrio La Plazuela, Avenida Cervantes, Casa 1301, Tegucigalpa, Honduras



The Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras is one of the country's main human rights organisations. It seeks justice for current human rights abuses and "disappearances" in the 80's. It also trains human rights activists. Its staff are at great risk, suffering death threats, harassment and attacks. Female workers have been threatened with sexual violence. Send a simple message of greeting and support; sign your name and add your address.

PLEASE SEND A CARD, A RELIGIOUS CARD IF YOU WISH, TO:-

WOZA - Women of Zimbabwe Arise, PO Box FM701, Famona, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe



WOZA was formed in 2003 to provide women with a united voice in the face of arrest, harassment and beatings by the police. It campaigns against the social, economic and human rights conditions in their country, as experienced by women. Jenni Williams, WOZA's founder and national co-ordinator, has been imprisoned over 50 times. Every Valentine's Day members hand out roses with the message "The power of love can conquer the love of power." Send a simple message of support and greeting and sign your name and address.

The following two cases are included in order to highlight the value of maintaining links to those imprisoned for very long periods.

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.

Brutally tortured and forced to make a false confession about his connection with the KIA and different bombings in the area, Lahpai Gam was also accused of leaving the refugee camp several times to attend military training sessions with the KIA. 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. After over a year in detention he was sentenced to 2 years in prison in November 2013, with an additional 5 years added in December. A further 14 years were added on 5 June 2014. He is now serving a 21 year sentence in Myitkyina Prison. On 30 January 2014, the United Nations Working Group On Arbitrary Detention ruled that his detention is arbitrary, contravenes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and demanded his immediate release.

Please write or send a card to:

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

Nazadin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, Iran



Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe was featured in the September/November 2016 ACAT Newsletter, which focussed on urging the UK government to help her. This Advent you are invited to send a card to Nazadin herself. The card can be religious, include your name and address and information about yourself and/or ACAT. It is not known whether she will be allowed to

receive it, but her family asks that you send one.

Nazadin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

Evin Prison

District 2

Behesht St

Tehran

Iran

TO RECEIVE THE ACAT NEWS LETTER, CONTACT:

The ACAT (UK) Office, c/o 6 Coleridge Road, Ottery St Mary, East Devon, EX11 1TD Tel. 01404 814186 Email: uk.acat@gmail.com	Contact details: Derek Lewis (Secretary) Tel. 01404 814186 Email: D.R.Lewis@exeter.ac.uk Maurice Dyson (Treasurer) Tel. 01624 824255 Email: dyson@manx.net
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