

Actions by Christians against Torture ACAT (UK)

For those of you, who might be considering a switch in support away from Amnesty International, you might be interested in finding out about another organisation, Action by Christians against Torture (ACAT), which was formed in 1984. ACAT (UK) is affiliated to the International Federation of Action by Christians for the abolition of Torture (FiACAT), which is based in Paris. ACAT (UK) is a Body in Association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

ACAT's work is much narrower than that of Amnesty International, which because it is not a Charity can and does campaign for change in legislation or Government policy (including that of the UK). ACAT is a Registered Charity. Its Charter is solely concerned with torture.

ACAT's aim is to work, as Christians, for the abolition of torture world-wide. It seeks to increase awareness in the Churches and among Christians of the widespread and evil use of torture and the need, for reasons of Christian faith, to campaign for its abolition.

ACAT works by obtaining examples on specific examples of torture worldwide, encouraging members to write letters to governments in countries where torture is practised, supporting victims of torture and ill-treatment, praying for the tortured and the torturers and by keeping abreast of legislation relating to torture.

A few of the people it currently remembers, prays for and supports include:

- Lobsang Thokmey and Ronggye A'Drak, both of whom were arrested in August 2007 in the Tibet Autonomous Region in China. Lobsang Thokmey has "disappeared", while Ronggye A'Drak is being held incommunicado at the local Public Security Detention Centre
- Franklin Labial, President of the United Farmers Association in the Philippines, was gunned down in front of his home. He had recently been defending the rights of local farmers and indigenous people against big business;
- Laul Gebreab, Pastor in Eritrea, who was arrested in August 2007 and is being held incommunicado;
- Mansour Osanloo, president of a trade union in Iran, who was abducted and badly beaten in July and is now being held in Evin prison, where torture is common. His wife and sister are being harassed and threatened.

Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured." Hebrews 13 v 3 **For further information, why not visit their web-site: <http://www.acatuk.org.uk/>.** Alternatively, their address is ACAT-UK, 8 Southfield, Saltash, Cornwall PL12 4LX or their telephone number is 01752 843417. **Contributed by Tim Edwards**