

English version

THÈME DE LA NUIT DES VEILLEURS 2021

« Va avec cette force que tu as »

JG 6-14

Ensemble, portons la flamme de l'espérance pour soutenir les victimes de la torture



À l'occasion de la Journée internationale des Nations Unies
pour le soutien aux victimes de la torture, l'ACAT invite les chrétiens
à s'unir dans la prière, lors de

La Nuit des veilleurs

du vendredi 25 au samedi 26 juin,
en France et à travers le monde

Allumez une bougie et retrouvez toutes les ressources sur www.nuitdesveilleurs.com

© Illustration : Juliette Leveillé

la Nuit des
Veilleurs

ACAT

L'ACAT, ONG chrétienne de
défense des droits humains, agit
pour faire reculer la torture et la
peine de mort.

EN PARTENARIAT AVEC :

LA CROIX

Réforme

"GO WITH THAT STRENGTH THAT YOU HAVE!"

(JUDGES 6,14-16)

The Lord turned to [Gideon] and said, "Go with this strength you have and save Israel from Midian. Yes, I sent you. " *But Gideon said to him, "Pardon me, my lord, how shall I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house! ". The Lord answered him, "I will be with you, and so you will defeat the Midianites all together."*
"Jg 6,14-16

THE STRENGTH IN US

(Extract from the meditation)

This force is there, in each of us, at least potentially. It is deployed in faith in the Word of God ("Yes, it is I who send you. I will be with you") and in hope (for Gideon, for Moses, it is the salvation of Israel. ; for Christians, the second coming of Christ). She talks in prayer. Let's look at Jesus! He never undertakes anything without praying to his Father, sometimes whole nights (Lk 6,12; Mk 6,47; Mt 26,36-44; Jn 17,1-26). He listens to the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit. In John 5:19, he says that he does nothing of himself but acts in perfect unity with the Father. And further on: "I can't do anything on my own. From what I hear, I am judging, and my judgment is right, because I am not seeking my own will, but the will of the one who gave me the mission. »(John 5,30) And what he does leads him not to earthly glory, to power, to wealth, but to the gift of his life in an iniquitous trial, torture and killing, a series which has the appearance of a dismal failure. A failure that, in the eyes of many, the announcement of the Resurrection does not erase.

And now, before joining his Father, he asks us to follow him and act in unity with him in the Holy Spirit: "Peace to you! As the Father has sent me, I too give you mission. And, that said, he breathes and says to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. "(Jn 20,21-22)



La Nuit des veilleurs

EN PARTENARIAT AVEC **LA CROIX** Réforme





CONGO – BRAZZA

André Okombi Salissa*

On March 6, 2019, the Criminal Court of Brazzaville sentenced André Okombi Salissa, a presidential candidate in the 2016 general elections, to twenty years of hard labor for "undermining internal security of the state, illegal possession of weapons and weapons and war munitions". His six lawyers left the courtroom just before the closing arguments as a symbolic act to protest an unfair trial in which the rights of the defense were not respected.

On October 1, 2018, the United Nations Working Group on detention adopted an advisory opinion stating that "the deprivation of liberty of André Okombi Salissa's freedom" is arbitrary and called for "the immediate release of Mr. Salissa"¹.

André Okombi Salissa, born in 1961, used to be close to President Denis Sassou Nguesso camp. An influential member of the ruling Congolese Labor Party (PCT) and a minister in every government from 1997 to 2012, André Okombi Salissa switched to the opposition when Denis Sassou Nguesso decided to change Congo's constitution in order to be able to run once again for president to maintain his hold on the country after 34 years in power.

From October 2015 to February 2017, Congolese authorities carried out a massive wave of arbitrary arrests and detentions of opponents who they were exercising their rights to freedom of expression, denouncing the change in the constitution, and refusing to recognize Denis Sassou Nguesso's victory. After making criticisms concerning the constitutional referendum of October 2015 especially via the foreign media, André Okombi Salissa became an enemy of the regime and was treated as such: from October to

December 2015, he was placed under house arrest in Brazzaville by Congolese authorities.

In April 2016, André Okombi Salissa was once again placed under house arrest, after he publicly stated that he did not acknowledge the results of the March 2016 presidential election won by Denis Sassou Nguesso. To protect himself from arbitrary arrest, the opponent decided to go into hiding.

On September 23rd, 2016, several weapons were discovered in a shed located on an unused plot of land belonging to his wife. An investigation was immediately opened citing "the internal security of the state and illegal possession of weapons and and illegal possession of weapons and munitions of war". In December 2016, a member of Mr. Salissa's family died from torture following an interrogation. On January 10, 2017, André Okombi Salissa was arrested in a neighborhood north of Brazzaville after six months of hiding.

André Okombi Salissa is a political prisoner.

In order to write to him:
ACAT France
7 rue Georges Lardennois
75019 Paris

We will convey your messages.

**André Okombi Salissa's situation as at the time of writing*

1

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Detention/Opinions/Session81/A_HRC_WGAD_2018_5.pdf



CHINA

Zhang Zhan*

Lawyer and "citizen journalist", Zhang Zhan was one of the first to report on the health situation in Wuhan, China. Her commitment to the truth led her to prison where she continues her struggle.

A former lawyer, Zhang Zhan is a citizen journalist who is used to expressing herself actively via social networks, on politics and human rights issues in China.

In February 2020, she went to Wuhan a few days after the city was placed under a ban, to investigate a comment from an Internet user that he had been left alone to face death. Along with a few others, including Fan Bing and Chen Qiushi, also supported by ACATFrance, she filmed bedridden patients in a hospital corridor in Wuhan. Her images give a rare glimpse of the sanitary conditions in the first city in the world to be affected by the coronavirus, far from the image that the official media tried to impose. She is also seen standing up to a police officer ordering her to stop filming. "I have the right to monitor what the State does", she answered calmly to the man who tried to snatch her cell phone.

In May 2020, Zhang Zhan was arrested and sentenced in late December to four years in prison for "provoking public disorder". In provisional detention, from June 2020, she started a hunger strike to protest against her detention and claim her innocence. Her jailers retaliated with a nasogastric probe. Her hands were tied to prevent her from removing it and

her health is deteriorating according to her lawyer who was able to visit.

On December 18, 2020, the People's Court of the Pudong New District Court informed Zhang Zhan's defense lawyer that her trial date was set for December 28. On that day, Zhang Zhan was wheeled into the courtroom in a wheelchair. According to her lawyer, Zhang Zhan is physically weak. In addition, she was forced to wear leg shackles and had her hands tied 24 hours a day for more than three months, as a punishment for being on hunger strike.

At her trial, Zhang Zhan was accused of using social media platforms to spread false information. Zhang Zhan was mainly reporting on the arrest of other independent journalists and the harassment suffered by families of victims.

Despite this, she remains combative and refuses to answer the judge who asks her to state her identity. After the verdict, she refused to appeal. "She thinks that the whole system as a whole is absurd," says her lawyer who was able to visit her in mid-January.

"She does not want to compromise," he said. She insists "that she has never been this determined".

In order to write to her:

ACAT France
7 rue Georges Lardennois
75019 Paris

ACAT will convey your messages.

*Zhang Zhan's situation as at the time of writing



EGYPT

Ramy Kamel*

Since the 2011 revolution, Ramy Kamel has been defending the right to religious liberty as well as documenting human rights violations against the community to which he belongs. Arrested during the fall of 2019, he is still in detention.

On November 23, 2019, Ramy Kamel was arrested at his home without warrant by 7 police officers dressed in plain clothes. His camera, his computer and his phone were seized. Known for denouncing discrimination and violence suffered by the Coptic community, Ramy was interrogated without the presence of his lawyer and was tortured. Transferred to Tora prison, his pre-trial detention was regularly extended. The State Security Prosecutor accused him of “participating in a terrorist group and its financing, spreading false information and disturbing public order through social media”.

His arrest was in retaliation for his human rights work and his involvement with the United Nations. In April 2019, 7 months before his arrest, Ramy Kamel had indeed reported on the discrimination suffered by Copts since the arrival of President Al-Sissi to power. At the end of November 2020, he was to participate in the Forum on Minority Issues organized in Geneva by the United Nations. His arrest occurred days before his departure for Geneva. Ramy Kamel was tortured twice by national security agents. Since then, he has been placed in solitary confinement.



For UN experts, this amounts to torture and demonstrates the arbitrary nature of his detention. This detention is extended every 45 days, while his last face-to-face hearing took place on December 2, 2019.

On 23rd August, Kamel's sister was able to visit him for 20 minutes, during which she was able to see that her brother had lost about a third of his weight. He told her that he was in a very bad state of mental health, due to his prolonged isolation. He also told her that he suffered from repeated asthma attacks and that he had not received proper medical care for 3 months.

November 23, 2020 marked the first anniversary of Ramy Kamel's detention. On January 17, 2021, the Cairo Criminal Court court in Cairo renewed his detention for 45 days. In view of his health condition, Ramy Kamel is particularly at risk of contracting COVID-19. On April 15, 2021, 43 organizations and organizations and individuals wrote a letter to President of the United States Joseph Biden to give attention to the very troubling case of Ramy Kamel.

In order to write to him:

ACAT France
7 rue Georges Lardennois
75019 Paris

ACAT will convey your messages.

**Ramy Kamel's situation as at the time of writing*



MOROCCO- Western Sahara

Mohamed Lamine Haddi*

Mohamed Lamine Haddi is a Sahrawi activist who participated in the protests of the Gdeim Izik camp in 2010, in connection with the social and economic situation of the Sahrawis. Arrested with others, following the dismantling of the camp, he was sentenced in 2013 to 25 years of imprisonment. His confession was extracted from him under torture.

He is imprisoned far from his family, making it very difficult to contact them, even though this is an internationally recognized right. The detention conditions of Sahrawi prisoners are terrible.

Mohamed Lamine Haddi is in solitary confinement and is only allowed out of his cell for one hour. In December 2020, the prison director ordered that all of his personal effects be confiscated. He has not been permitted to receive a visit from his lawyer since March 2020, nor has he been able to see his family.

Mohamed Lamine Haddi began a hunger strike on January 17, 2021 to draw attention to his conditions of detention in the prison of Tiflet II. He has in fact told his lawyer that he would rather die than continue like this. Since February

22, telephone calls with his family have been forbidden.

Because of the conditions of his detention, Mohamed Lamine is now suffering from partial paralysis on his right side, memory loss and pain in his left hand. Despite this, he is denied access to a doctor.

Since February 25, 2021, his family has not heard from him any more news of him.

Since March 1st the right to visits has been once again restored. His mother went to prison where he is detained, 1200 km away from her home, but she was not allowed to see him. Since then, she has been waiting there and was even detained by the police for a few hours on 3rd March.

In order to write to him; please use:

ACAT France

7 rue Georges Lardennois

75019 Paris

ACAT will convey your messages.

**Mohamed Lamine Haddi's situation as at the time of writing*



MEXICO

Kenia Ines Fernandez Montalvan*

Kenia Ines Fernandez Montalvan has been a human rights defender for a long time.

She is the coordinator of the Colectivo Libertario Zapata Vive, a farmers' movement that defends the right to land and promotes different forms of peaceful resistance against the neoliberal economic models imposed by the Mexican state. Between June and October 2020, she was arrested 3 times on false charges in order to turn into criminal charges, her peaceful and legitimate demands and activities in favor of the peasant communities. Since October 2020, she has been detained in deplorable conditions that threaten her health whilst the public prosecutor's office multiplies cases against her.

On June 6th, Kenia Ines Fernandez Montalvan was arrested while peacefully demonstrating to demand the release of political prisoners in the state of Guerrero. She was placed in custody until June 11. She appeared before a judge of the judicial review court of Ecatepec and was placed on probation.

On October 18, 2020, she was again arrested by unidentified police officers and incarcerated on the charge of robbery with violence. On October 25, 2020, a new arrest warrant for the arrest of Kenia Inés Hernández, this time federal in nature, was requested and accepted for the alleged crime of "attacks on the street". The human rights' defender was supposed to be released on probation on October 25, but she was re-arrested at the Santiaguito Social



ilitation Center of Santiaguito, in Almoloya de Juarez Almoloya de Juarez, a few hours before her release. Several cases have been filed against her since her incarceration. On March 25 March 2021, Kenia and her lawyers were informed by the prosecutor's office that a new investigation had been opened.

Since October 2020, she had been in pre-trial detention in a maximum security prison, the Centro Federal de Readaptación Social Femenil. On January 16, 2021, the prosecutor requested a 5 year imprisonment sentence against her, making 6 opened cases - proof of a real agenda against her, who only seems an indigenous woman committed to a cause.

Today, it is her health that is most preoccupying. On April 1, 2021, Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván informed the judge of control of Acapulco that she was suffering from fever, headaches, stomach aches, chills and general body pains. general. The judge allegedly requested for information from the detention center about the living conditions of the defender.

Kenia Inés Hernández Montalván believes that the ailments she suffers are caused by the poor sanitary conditions of the detention center where she is imprisoned. there, she has to keep drinking water and eating food of poor quality and low nutritional value and this has been so since October2020.

A demonstration was held in Mexico City on March 18 March in front of the Federal Prosecutor's office to demand her release, five months after her arrest. The practice of making unfounded allegations against human rights human rights defenders, aims at intimidating those who work for the promotion and protection of human rights in Mexico.

In order to write to her:

ACAT France

7 rue Georges Lardennois

75019 Paris

ACAT will convey your messages.

**Kenia Ines Fernandez Montalvan's situation as at the time of writing*

This celebration is organized by the ACAT group

.....

To contact us

Last name:

First name:

Phone:

Mail:

