**News update January 2021**

In December the Lahore High Court acquitted Imran Ghafur Masih, a Christian who was serving a life sentence under Pakistan’s blasphemy laws and had spent more than eleven years in Faisalabad Central Jail. He and his family have gone into hiding for fear of extremist attack.

He was featured in our June-August 2018 newsletter appeals.

Aid to the Church in Need published its Red Wednesday Report, Set your Captives Free, into Christians kidnapped or imprisoned during 2017-2019.Christians emerge as the world’s most widely targeted faith group, slightly ahead of Islam across the world. ACN also launched a petition for the UK to grant asylum to Maria Shahbaz, a 14-year old Pakistani Christian who was drugged, gang-raped, forced into marriage and is at risk of being killed for apostasy. She is currently in hiding (November/December 2020).

Cardinal Christian Tumi, Archbishop Emeritus of Douala, called for an amnesty and the army's withdrawal in the conflict between separatist Anglophones and primarily French-speaking regions of Cameroon. Appeals for victims of this conflict have featured in the ACAT newsletter. The Cardinal was briefly kidnapped by Anglophone separatists in December. The country also faces deadly attacks from the violent Islamist movement Boko Haram.

Bishops in Mozambique have called for dialogue in the recent violent conflict with Islamist insurgents, which has seen massacres and around 400,000 displaced persons over the last three years (November 2020).

In November 2020 the Brereton Report appeared, detailing war crimes committed by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) during the War in Afghanistan between 2005 and 2016. 19 soldiers are under investigation for the murder of 39 prisoners and the cruel treatment of two others.