

**REPRIEVE**

**DELIVERING JUSTICE  
AND SAVING LIVES**



**Impact Report**  
2018

# REPRIEVE

**Together,** we deliver justice and save lives.

**Our Vision** is a world without the death penalty; and secret prisons and state-sanctioned assassinations carried out in the name of the so-called War on Terror.

**Reprieve is an organisation of courageous and committed human rights defenders.**

Founded in 1999 by British human rights lawyer Clive Stafford Smith, we provide free legal and investigative support to some of the world's most vulnerable people: those facing execution, and those victimised by states' abusive counter-terror policies – rendition, torture, extrajudicial imprisonment and extra-judicial killing.

**Our lawyers and investigators are supported by a community of people from all around the world, connected by a belief in human rights, the rule of law, due process and justice.** Together, we advocate for the victims of extreme human rights abuses with a combination of legal action, public advocacy, education, and the provision of technical advice to decision-makers.

- » **We litigate** on behalf of prisoners on death rows around the world, appealing their sentences, their methods of execution, and ensuring that their trials are fair and just;
- » **We represent** detainees in Guantánamo Bay and other secret prisons, advocating for their rights; seeking to secure their safe release, access to due process and a fair trial; and educating key stakeholders and the public about their unlawful detention;
- » **We campaign** to raise awareness about states' unlawful drone strikes that routinely kill civilians in places like Pakistan and Yemen. We help our partners in these countries to challenge drone strikes in court;
- » **We work** with the pharmaceutical industry to help them put a stop to US departments of corrections using their life-saving medicines in executions;
- » **We investigate** allegations of extreme rights abuses by state actors when foreign nationals are arrested and detained overseas;
- » **We challenge** governments to intervene in order to protect the rights and safety of their citizens.

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# Introduction

**Anna Yearley | Executive Director**



As I look back on another year at Reprieve, I continue to be awe-struck by the impact of our small but courageous organisation. We took a giant step closer towards our goal of a world free from the death penalty and extreme state-perpetrated ‘war on terror’ abuses’ – from securing the release of over 130 former death row inmates in Malawi by the end of 2018, to exposing the UK’s opaque policy on torture. We have used innovative and strategic approaches to further our cause, with remarkable success.

The month of May was a particular highlight for me. Firstly, we had the incredible news that, after spending four years facing execution in Ethiopia, Andy Tsege had been released from death row to return to his incredible partner Yemi and their three children in London. Yemi first came to see Reprieve back in 2014 where she told us about Andy’s situation and the ordeal he and his family were going through. From public campaigns calling on the UK government to end Andy’s suffering - including working with MPs from across the political spectrum, enlisting the support of our high profile friends and supporters, raising his case in Brussels, and a campaign in conjunction with cosmetics company LUSH – all Reprieve’s staff pulled together, over four long years, to secure Andy’s freedom. We are so grateful to everyone who didn’t forget Andy and who made his release possible.

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**“When Andy and Yemi came to Reprieve’s office and shook the hand of each member of our team, it was a special moment. I am incredibly proud of what Reprieve was able to achieve, and how our amazing staff never ever gave up.”**

When Andy and Yemi came to Reprieve’s office and shook the hand of each member of our team, it was a special moment: Yemi, full of despair when we first met her, was now brimming with happiness and joy. I am incredibly proud of what Reprieve was able to achieve, and how our amazing staff never ever gave up.

The following week, we secured another landmark victory. On 10th May, the British government issued an unprecedented apology to Abdul-Hakim Belhaj and Fatima Boudchar for its role in their 2004 abduction, torture and rendition to Gaddafi's Libya. This was a case that Reprieve had been working on for over six years, and to finally secure such a ground-breaking outcome was testament to the resilience of our clients and the members of Reprieve's team who had lived and breathed the case for years in our quest for justice. The impact of the case is truly historic. It represents a victory not only for Abdul-Hakim, Fatima and their children, but a victory against state-perpetrated injustice.

Most organisations would hope for one of these victories in a year. We achieved two in as many weeks – an incredible achievement. Above anything, to me it highlights the dogged determination of Reprieve; that we will continue to fight the long hard battles until justice is finally served.

There are many other highlights of 2018, too many to mention here or cover in this report. None of these achievements would have been possible without the loyalty, action and enthusiasm of our supporters. To everyone who has helped Reprieve save lives and deliver justice, thank you. We simply could not do it without you.



## **Board of Trustees**

Lord (Jim) Wallace of Tankerness QC (Chair)  
Ursula Owen OBE  
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# The Chair of Trustees

## Lord (Jim) Wallace of Tankerness PC QC



In my second year as Chair of Reprieve's Board of Trustees, I remain both humbled and uplifted by the incredible work of this organisation. Its ability to mobilise a network of global supporters, stakeholders and allies to achieve an impact far beyond its size is astonishing.

What impresses me most is the creativity of those who work for Reprieve: their ability to think outside the box in order to create lasting and impactful change. 2018 has been no different. The strategies Reprieve has employed has saved lives around the world, and ensured that the most marginalised and disenfranchised have the access to justice to which they are entitled.

Over the past twelve months, Reprieve has helped release people from death rows around the world, highlighted the true extent of the application of the death penalty in Egypt and forced the UK to reveal the order permitting MI5 agents to commit criminal acts.

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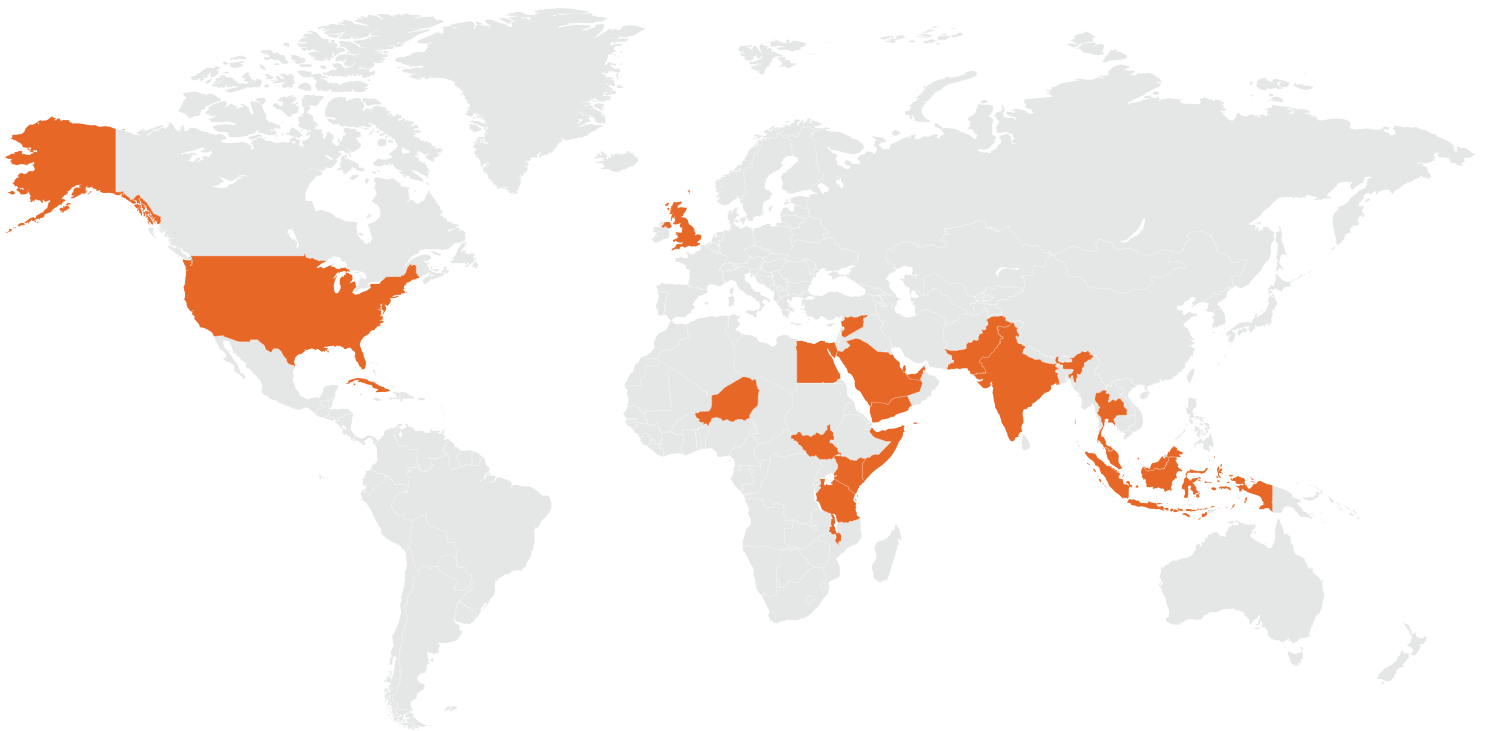
**“In my second year as Chair of Reprieve's Board of Trustees, I continue to be both humbled and uplifted by the incredible work of this organisation.”**

These have all been possible thanks to thoughtful strategy and agile nature – Reprieve reacts quickly to emerging threats and rapidly refocuses resources to combat them.

In what has been a tumultuous political year filled with uncertainty, Reprieve's message remains clear and uncompromising. It has continued to speak truth to power, telling the human stories of those affected by some of the most egregious human rights abuses. In doing so, they have successfully shifted the narrative away from stereotypes and towards the individual with rights equal to any other. I am incredibly proud to be a part of this remarkable organisation.

# OUR IMPACT

**In 2018 we undertook human rights work in 21 countries worldwide**



- USA
- Egypt
- Bahrain
- Saudi Arabia
- UAE
- Indonesia
- Thailand
- Malaysia
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Tanzania
- Pakistan
- Cuba
- UK
- Yemen
- South Sudan
- India
- Niger
- Maldives
- Syria
- Somalia



# OUR WORK IN NUMBERS

212

beneficiaries received access to justice through support from Reprieve.

11

of our beneficiaries were saved from a death sentence or execution.

8

Reprieve provided legal representation and support to eight detainees that remain at Guantánamo Bay.

79

We provided legal, pastoral and resettlement support to 79 former Guantánamo detainees through our unique Life After Guantánamo project.

11

We investigated nine drone strikes in Yemen and two raids in Somalia.

20

Reprieve worked with over 20 local partner organisations globally.

27

We worked with 27 individuals and two families who have either themselves been injured in drone strikes or lost loved ones to them. For 22 of these individuals, we brought litigation before the International Criminal Court, the US and German courts.

# Death penalty

## AROUND THE WORLD

**Reprieve has continued to limit the application of the death penalty around the world. From the US to the UAE, Pakistan to Indonesia, our strategic approach has saved lives.**



### SAUDI ARABIA

For more than a decade, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has ranked among the top five executors in the world. In 2018, the Saudi authorities executed 149 people. Many of those executed are from the most vulnerable groups in society, including those with severe mental health problems or intellectual disabilities, the innocent, and those who have been tortured. Reprieve has worked to build awareness of the actions of this oppressive regime, bringing national and international condemnation.

In March, Mohammed bin Salman travelled to the UK to meet Theresa May as part of an international tour to promote Saudi Arabia. During the visit, Reprieve handed in a petition with over 75,000 supporters calling on the Prime Minister to ensure no UK assistance continues until the Crown Prince abolishes the death penalty for protest-related offences and immediately reviews the cases of all those facing imminent execution. We also tried to deliver a petition to the Saudi Embassy in London to call on the government to stop the executions; perhaps unsurprisingly, they refused to accept it.

## PAKISTAN

In November, Arshad Ahmed was released from Kotli prison in Pakistan. Arshad, a grandfather from Birmingham who has learning difficulties, is a long-term UK resident who was arrested at the airport in Pakistan in 2003 when he was found with narcotics in his suitcase. Reprieve has worked on Arshad's case for over ten years, and helped bring a successful appeal on his behalf in the Supreme Court of Pakistan, which commuted Arshad's death sentence in 2017 noting he was a "simple courier" who never should have been sentenced to death.

## EGYPT

In 2018, Reprieve launched a report into the application of the death penalty against juveniles in Egypt - 'Stolen Youth: Juveniles, Mass Trials and the Death Penalty in Egypt'. The report draws on information and collected cases and focuses on the gaps between law and practice in the use of the death penalty in Egypt. It provides a wealth of evidence showing that despite both Egyptian law and international law prohibiting death sentences for juveniles, Egypt routinely tries juveniles as adults on charges that carry the death penalty (with no guarantee they will not receive a death sentence). In some cases, Egypt even sentenced juveniles to death.

## MALAWI

When Malawi's High Court ruled the mandatory death penalty unconstitutional in 2007, anyone who was given the death penalty became entitled to have their case re-examined. To secure and facilitate new sentence hearings that adhered to international fair trial standards, Reprieve, along with a group of organisations, came together in 2014 to establish the Malawi Resentencing Project. The project has been incredibly successful and, at the end of 2018, 169 prisoners had received new sentence hearings, 138 prisoners had been released into the care of their families and communities, and not a single person had been resentenced to death.



## THE UNITED STATES

Reprise's strategic cases and project work related to the death penalty have helped contribute to a significant decline in capital punishment in the US in 2018.

### In 2018:

- Fewer than 30 people were executed in the US – a 74% decrease in executions from 1999;
- The overwhelming majority of states that retain the death penalty (73%) were unable to execute – just eight states out of 30 were able to carry out executions;
- More than half of these executions were carried out by a single state: Texas;
- Oklahoma only imposed one new death sentence and carried out zero executions, despite previously being top of the list for number of executions;
- No county in the US handed down more than two death sentences.

During the course of 2018, Reprise provided extensive advice and support to global pharmaceutical manufacturers, distributors, investors and regulators to prevent the misuse of medicines in lethal injection executions. Today, every FDA-approved supplier of drugs historically used by prisons for executions has imposed distribution controls on their medicines, blocking their use in lethal injections.

## CASE STUDY: ANDY TSEGE



**After tireless work from Reprieve staff and supporters, Andy Tsege received a pardon from the Ethiopian government after four years on death row.**

Andy is a British citizen who was living in London when he was unlawfully sentenced to death in absentia by the Ethiopian authorities, on politically motivated charges. He was kidnapped at an international airport in June 2014 and illegally transported to Ethiopia where he spent four long years. Andy's partner, Yemi, approached Reprieve for help shortly after his detention in 2014, and we campaigned vigorously for his release, enlisting the help of MPs, celebrities and the public in the call to bring him home. Our efforts paid off: in May 2018, Andy was pardoned by the Ethiopian government and is now home in London with Yemi, whom he has since married, and their children.

# Secret Prisons, Torture and Assassinations

## GUANTÁNAMO BAY

Since the legal black hole of Guantánamo Bay Detention Centre opened in 2002, Reprieve has been at the forefront of the legal battle against indefinite detention and torture there. We were among the first organisations to enter the base and are responsible for the release of 80 men – more than any other NGO or law firm worldwide. 11th January 2018 marked 16 years since Guantánamo Bay became the ugly place of incarceration in the post 9/11 world. On the anniversary, Reprieve and the Centre for Constitutional Rights launched a landmark mass habeas petition on behalf of Guantánamo detainees, including four Reprieve beneficiaries. The challenge argues that the continued detention of people without charge at the prison is unconstitutional, because any legitimate reason for initially detaining them has long since expired.

The mass habeas case has already exposed what we have known for a long time – Guantánamo is a legal black hole. At an oral hearing in the case, the judge pushed the US administration further on how long it thinks it can imprison people without charge or trial – the Justice Department's attorney responded "we could hold them for 100 years if the conflict lasts 100 years." In other words, in a war without end, the men are forever prisoners.

Alongside the mass habeas petition, Reprieve launched a short video called #WorstTrumpDeal shedding light on the astonishing cost wasted each year by keeping Guantánamo open. We revealed that the U.S. government spends \$849,307 a day locking up 41 men who have never been charged with a crime. In just a month the video was watched over 67,000 times. More than 30,000 supporters have joined our campaign to close Guantánamo for good.

# LIFE AFTER GUANTÁNAMO

**Reprieve's Life After Guantánamo (LAG) project began in 2009** and is designed to assist detainees and their families both before, in preparation for, and after they leave Guantánamo. In 2018, the project provided assistance to 79 current Guantánamo detainees, former detainees and family members in 23 countries. LAG is the only rehabilitation project exclusively focused on torture victims who have been held at Guantánamo Bay and their families.

## CASE STUDY: YOUNOUS CHEKKOURI

In 2002, Younous Chekkouri was undertaking charity work in Afghanistan when he was seized and sold to US forces for a bounty. He spent 14 years in Guantánamo being held without charge or trial. Despite being unanimously cleared for release in 2009, he wasn't actually freed until 2015 after a legal and media campaign orchestrated by Reprieve. After finally being repatriated to Morocco, he was arrested on the baseless charge of 'attempts to disrupt the security of the country.' Reprieve supported Younous for over eight years, facilitating his legal representation. Finally, in February 2018, we received the amazing news that Younous had been acquitted and is finally free. Reprieve continues to work with Younous, supporting him in rebuilding his life with his wife and baby daughter.



Younous (left) celebrating his freedom with his lawyer after 14 years of abuse in Guantánamo

# ASSASSINATIONS

## CASE STUDY: BILAL ABDUL KAREEM

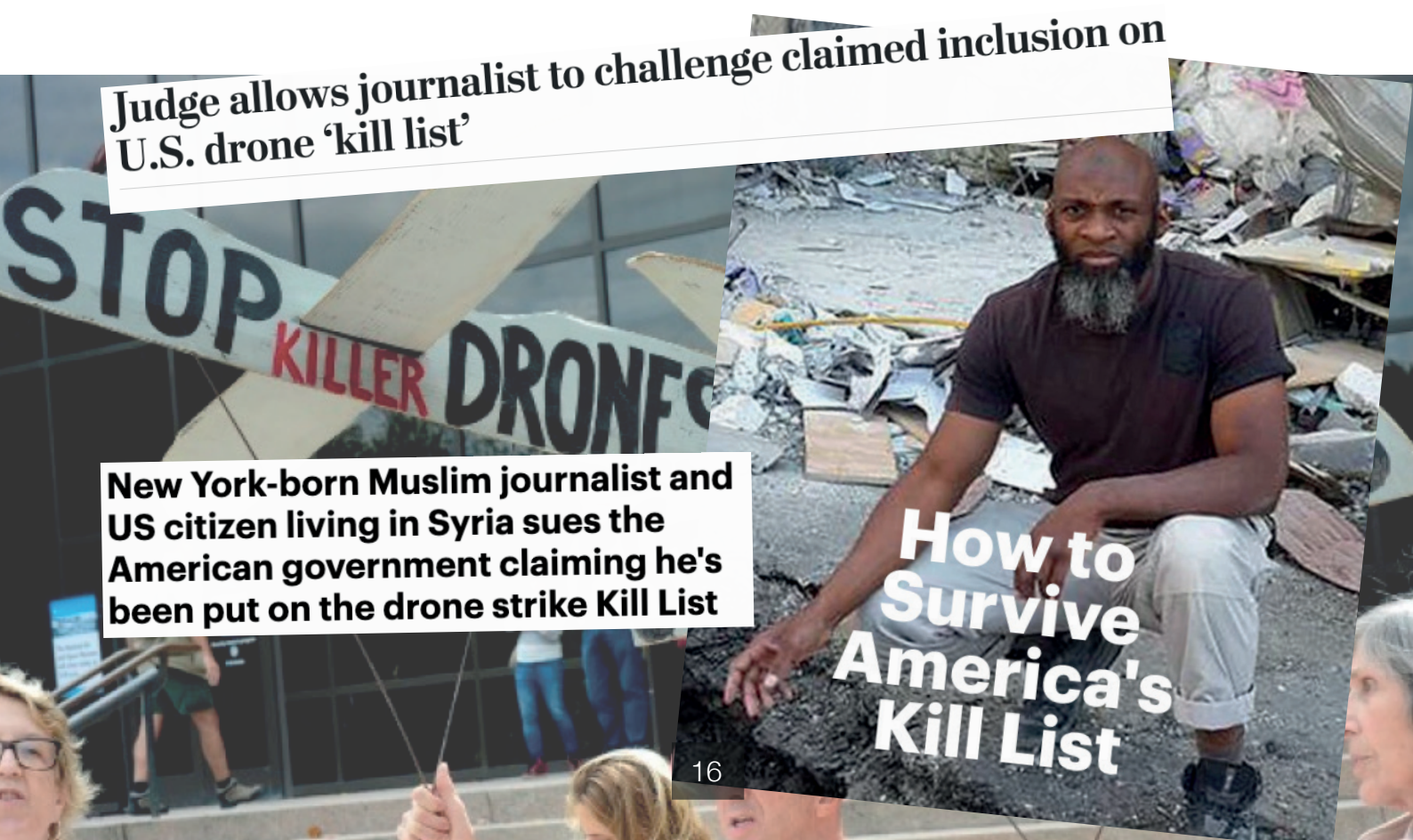
Bilal is an American journalist who has been reporting on the conflict in Syria since it began. In 2016, he narrowly escaped being killed on five separate occasions, including two strikes on cars he was travelling in and a further two strikes on the headquarters of his news agency, On The Ground News, while he was present. He believes the US Government has mistakenly identified him as a terrorist on account of him having interviewed rebel fighters and other groups in Syria, a vital part of his journalistic work.

In 2018, Reprieve won the right in court to challenge his presumed inclusion on the Kill List, in a breakthrough piece of strategic litigation.

“Due process is not merely an old and dusty procedural obligation. Instead, it is a living, breathing concept that protects US persons from over-reaching government action even, perhaps, on an occasion of war.” - Federal Judge Rosemary Collyer, in her ruling partially denying the Government’s motion to dismiss the case.

The ruling clears the way for Bilal to seek answers and try to clear his name. It could have repercussions for all those who find themselves on the Kill List with seemingly no access to justice.

The case has received coverage in The Washington Post, Politico and The Atlantic.



**Judge allows journalist to challenge claimed inclusion on U.S. drone 'kill list'**

**New York-born Muslim journalist and US citizen living in Syria sues the American government claiming he's been put on the drone strike Kill List**

**How to Survive America's Kill List**

# TORTURE AND RENDITION

In 2018, we have continued to make progress to bring an end to state-sanctioned rendition, unlawful detention and torture in the context of the so-called ‘war on terror’, shining a light on human rights abuses committed by the US and its allies. Our accountability work remains a key means of preventing future abuses: without consequences for past wrongs, there is no disincentive to prevent future harms. In 2018, we secured several successful outcomes, including in the case of Abdul-Hakim Belhaj.

## CASE STUDY: ABDUL-HAKIM BELHAJ



Abdul-Hakim Belhaj and his pregnant wife were abducted and tortured

On 10th May 2018, the British government issued an historic formal apology to Abdul-Hakim Belhaj and Fatima Boudchar for the UK’s role in their 2004 abduction, torture and rendition to Gaddafi’s Libya. The apology, which was read out in Parliament by the Prime Minister’s representative, is unprecedented in scope for a ‘war on terror’ case. It says that the couple’s “harrowing experiences ... [are] deeply troubling” and that the British Government “believes their accounts” of abduction and torture. It goes on to accept that the UK’s actions “contributed to your detention, rendition and suffering.” This hard-won apology is the result of years of campaigning and strategic legal work from Reprieve and others. The public apology is also critical in raising public awareness about the UK’s complicity in perpetrating serious human rights violations in the aftermath of 9/11.

# UK TORTURE ACCOUNTABILITY

In 2018, Reprieve successfully pushed for a public consultation on the UK's policy on torture – the Consolidated Guidance.

The policy sets out the principles governing information sharing in the context of detention and interviewing of detainees overseas. The policy is flawed, as it does not impose an absolute prohibition on UK action where there is a serious risk of torture, and provides no means for those affected by breaches of the policy to obtain redress.


## TIMELINE

**December 2017:** the Intelligence Services Commissioner (ISC) revealed that in a single year GCHQ had wrongly failed to apply the Consolidated Guidance in a total of 35 cases, and that in eight of those cases the Guidance would have blocked information being shared as the risk of torture and mistreatment was too great.

**May 2018:** Following litigation by Reprieve the British Government issued a historic formal apology to Abdul-Hakim Belhaj and Fatima Boudchar for the UK's role in their 2004 abduction, torture and rendition to Libya.

**May 2018:** Reprieve supported MPs across the political spectrum in writing to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office laying out concerns with the current guidance and making clear that a public consultation is needed.

**11th June 2018:** a cross-party group of MPs and peers write to Theresa May demanding a judge-led inquiry into the UK's role in torture and rendition since 9/11.



**June 2018:** A Reprieve supporter campaign reached 603 Members of Parliament across the political spectrum, informing them with the necessary information so that they were in a position to ask the government for a public inquiry on the torture guidance.

**17th June 2018:** Reprieve was passed an internal Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) memo accidentally disclosed by FCO officials confirming that “the Prime Minister agreed the Cabinet Office should lead a “light touch” review of the Guidance”.

**June:** We partnered with Amnesty International, Liberty, Rights Watch UK, Redress and Freedom from Torture to issue a letter to Prime Minister Theresa May calling for a public consultation on the Consolidated Guidance.

**28th June 2018:** On the morning the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) released its long-awaited report revealing on UK support for torture and rendition operations, The Times published an article on the leaked FCO memo Reprieve had obtained confirming the Prime Minister had declined to hold a public consultation in favour of a “light touch review”.

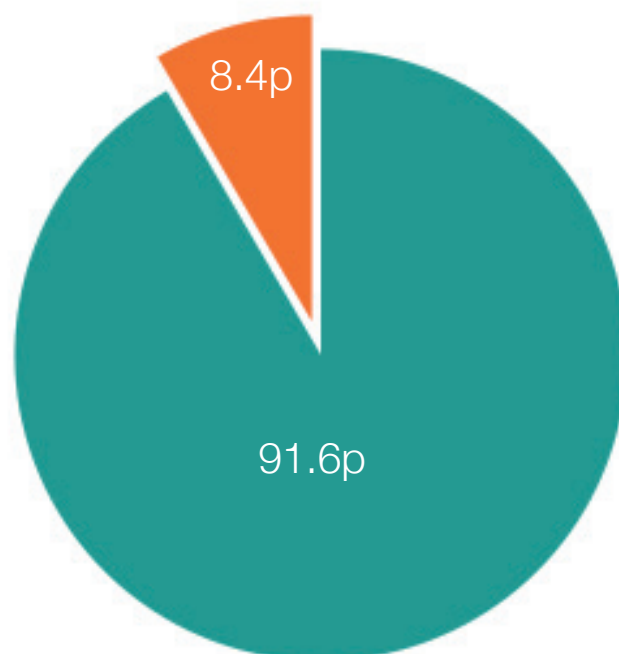
**28th June 2018:** On the same day, the Prime Minister announced the Government would U-turn on its refusal to hold a public consultation into the UK’s torture policy, and asked the Investigatory Powers Commissioner to carry out such a consultation.

**June 2018:** We brought the findings of the ISC report to the public’s attention with stories in The Times, Middle East Eye, the Daily Mail and the Daily Mirror.

# Finances

In 2018, 91.6p of every £1 donated to Reprive was spent on our charitable mission. The remaining 8.4p was spent either raising necessary funds needed for us to continue to operate to the best of our ability or was retained for future use.

Reprive ended 2018 on a deficit of £192,323. This was due to a managed spend-down of our reserves in order to capitalise on strategic opportunities. Our reserve levels remain in line with our reserves policy. More information is available in our 2018 annual accounts.



**Total income:**  
**Total expenditure:**

**£2,479,418**  
**£2,671,741**

## END OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

In 2018, Reprive took the decision to end its unpaid volunteer programme. Like many charities, Reprive has greatly benefitted from the use of volunteers in the past, but as a London based organisation, volunteer positions were typically filled by those who were able to support themselves financially. After a review and consultation with staff, it was felt that this was not reflective of our own practices and beliefs. As a result, the decision was taken to end our unpaid volunteer programme and instead move towards a scheme of 'funded placements' which include fellowships and secondments from law schools and other corporate partners.

# Thank you

## **Clive Stafford Smith | Co-Founder**

Over the past 19 years, I have seen Reprieve grow not only in size, but in reputation and influence. This has only been possible due to the incredibly generous level of support we receive from our loyal supporters, local partners, law firm friends and anyone who has given their time and expertise to us pro bono. Our cause is not necessarily a popular one, but I continue to be astonished by the number of people willing to chip in and contribute to our work – ensuring everyone has fair and equal access to human rights.

As I have said time and again since the founding of Reprieve, liberty is eroded at the margins, but it is thanks to our supporters and the donations we receive that enable Reprieve to hold up and reinforce the protective walls of human rights, rule of law and freedom.

Thank you to everyone that has made this possible – together we will continue to speak truth to power and seek justice for some of the most disenfranchised people in society.



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