

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release 2 December 2009

### INQUEST WINS THE LONGFORD PRIZE 2009

INQUEST is delighted to have won the Longford Prize 2009 which will be presented tonight at the 2009 Longford Lecture taking place at 6.30pm at Church House, Westminster. INQUEST was nominated for the prize by Dexter Dias QC and Brenda Campbell, barristers from Garden Court Chambers, London.

The commendation reads:

*We award the 2009 Longford Prize to INQUEST for its remarkable perseverance, personal commitment and courage in an area too often under-investigated by the public authorities, and especially for its support of the families of those who have taken their own lives while in the care of the state.*

Deborah Coles, Co-Director of INQUEST, said about the award:

*INQUEST's small dedicated staff team is delighted to receive this award for our work in upholding the human rights of bereaved people. Despite our size and limited resources INQUEST's unique combination of casework and policy has brought political, policy and judicial attention to the experience of bereaved people, the treatment and care of people in the custody of the state, the need for improvements to the investigation and inquest system, and for greater state and corporate accountability to prevent future deaths. We hope that this important award brings wider attention to and understanding of our important work.*

The Longford Prize recognises the contribution of an individual, group or organisation working in the area of penal or social reform which has shown "outstanding qualities of humanity, courage, persistence and originality" and was established as part of a trust in memory of the late Labour cabinet minister and outspoken prison reformer Lord Longford.

It is awarded annually by a prize committee on behalf of the trustees and patrons of the Frank Longford Charitable Trust. It is sponsored by *The Independent* newspaper and organised in association with the Prison Reform Trust.

#### Notes to editors:

The Longford Trust web page for the Prize is here: <http://www.longfordtrust.org/11187/index.html>

#### About Lord Longford

Frank Longford said often during his life that he would like his epitaph to be 'the outcasts' outcast'. It



summed up a long career as a politician, writer and campaigner on social and prison policy which was all about standing up for the unpopular, the unloved, the underdog and those on the margins of society.

### **About INQUEST**

INQUEST is the only organisation in England and Wales that provides a specialist, comprehensive advice service on contentious deaths and their investigation to bereaved people, lawyers, other advice and support agencies, the media, parliamentarians and the wider public. Its casework priorities are deaths in prison and in police custody, in immigration detention and in secure training centres. INQUEST develops policy proposals and undertakes research to campaign for changes to the inquest and investigation process, reduce the number of custodial deaths, and improve the treatment and care of those within the institutions where the deaths occur.

Further Information	<a href="http://www.inquest.org.uk">http://www.inquest.org.uk</a>
The Longford Trust	<a href="http://www.longfordtrust.org">http://www.longfordtrust.org</a>
INQUEST	office 020 7263 1111
Deborah Coles, Co-Director, INQUEST	office 020 7263 1111