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(July 23, 2008)**Five More Evangelicals Arrested**

September 05, 2008

As five evangelical Christians met for prayer on the evening of September 7 in the office of the New Covenant Church in Asmara, Eritrea, police burst in and arrested them, according to a September 15 report from Compass Direct. After a day's detention, the one woman in the group was released. The four men, including the pastor, Yohannes, were transferred to the Adi-Abyto military camp.

Hundreds of evangelical Christians have been arrested, some held for months in metal shipping containers with very limited food and air. On September 15, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that Eritrea has been included in its list of "countries of particular concern" because of the government's repressive action against any religious group not officially recognized. The other countries are Saudi Arabia, Vietnam (also listed for the first time), Burma, China, Iran, North Korea, and Sudan. The list was announced as the State Department made public its 2004 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom.

Pray for these Christians and the many others presently in prison for their faith in Eritrea. Pray that the Eritrean government will listen to the concerns of the international community and recognize the importance of religious freedom. Pray for Christians in Eritrea, as they continue to be salt and light in the midst of this oppression.

For more information on persecution facing Christians in Eritrea, [click here](#). To view a video report by VOM produced earlier this year on the persecution facing Christians in Eritrea, go to the Video section of VOM's multimedia website, [persecution.tv](#).



Shipping containers like these have frequently been used to imprison evangelical Christians

Eritrea Profile

Total Area:
121,320 sq. km

Population:
5,028,475 (July 2008 est.)

Ethnicity:
Tigrinya 50%, Tigre and Kunama 40%, Afar 4%, Saho (Red Sea coast dwellers) 3%, Other 3%

Language:
Afar, Amharic, Arabic, Tigre and Kunama, Tigrinya, other Cushitic languages

Religion:
Muslim, Coptic Christian, Roman Catholic, Protestant

Government Type:
Transitional Government
Note: Following a referendum on independence in April 1993, a National Assembly was formed, composed entirely of the People's Front for Democracy and Justice or PFDJ. Parliamentary elections had been scheduled to take place in December 2001, but were postponed indefinitely. Currently the sole legal party is the PFDJ.

Capital:
Asmara (Asmera)

Population Below Poverty Line:
50% (2004 est.)

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