

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_header\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_header\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1216

## **ERITREA: Latest mass imprisonment of Christians takes place**

**ERITREA: Eritrea likened to ‘giant prison’ as latest mass imprisonment of Christians takes place**

Premier Christian News (30.01.2023) – <https://bit.ly/3RBUvHh> – The Christian community in Eritrea has been rocked by another wave of mass arrests.

According to UK Christian persecution watchdog Release International, 44 Christians were recently detained as they were gathering in their homes for a church small group.

The group is being held at Mai Serwa prison on the outskirts of the capital, Asmara.

Christian religious freedom campaigners in the small African country have said the arrests of 39 women and five men now brings the total number of Christians imprisoned for their faith to at least 415.

Release International partner Dr Berhane Asmelash said: "Eritrea is like a giant prison. The country is filled with jails. It is like North Korea."

Christian persecution has been commonplace in Eritrea for many years. In May 2002, the country's dictatorship closed down most churches, and outlawed every religion except Sunni Islam, Eritrean Orthodox, Roman Catholicism and the Lutheran Church.

Andrew Boyd from Release International told *Premier* Christians who continue to worship in banned congregations are treated as "enemies of the state".

"They're not charged," he said. "They're detained indefinitely. There are no court appearances, there are no legal records kept in that country. You're just rounded up and held in there. And it's been happening for a long time now."

Among those detained and tortured for her faith is Twen Theodros, who was released due to a Covid-19 outbreak in the prison she was in.

She was imprisoned for 16 years and suffered intense persecution for her faith after police spotted her leaving a New Year's Eve prayer vigil 2004.

She was locked into a shipping container for almost three years at Mai Serwa prison.

During her time in a shipping container Twen recalls: "Many believers, mainly teenagers, came in and out of the prison, renouncing their faith in order to get released. These included pastors. So the prison officers put pressure on me, saying: 'We will make you [renounce your faith] by force. If you do not comply, you will die.'

But Twen never gave in. She also suffered severe beatings and was forced to run across ground covered in thorns.

Reflecting on her imprisonment, she said: "The grace of God made everything possible. I feel so blessed to participate in Christ's suffering. Even now, I do not have any hatred against those who put me in prison and tried to make my life miserable. I love them."

Eritrea is named as a country of concern in Release International's annual Persecution Trends report. It's also number four on Open Door's World Watch List, which ranks the worst places to live as a Christian.

Release International CEO Paul Robinson said: "We call on Christians to stand with our brothers and sisters in Eritrea as they continue to go through this dark night of the soul. They need our prayers.

"Freedom of faith is the cornerstone of all human freedoms. Release International continues to call on Eritrea to set free every Christian prisoner and permit full freedom of faith once again in their country."

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_footer\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_footer\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1268

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1268

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1269