

PRISONER PROFILE

Prisoner Name: **Mussie Ezaz**

Location: **Eritrea**

Arrested: **September 2007**

Sentence: **Indefinite**



Arrest and background

Mussie Ezaz has been an evangelist for more than 14 years and had worked with Youth for Christ for a number of years before developing his own ministry to young people as a leader in the Kale Hiwot Church. Married with three children, Mussie is a kind, generous and gifted leader who was first arrested in September 2007.

When he was first detained, Mussie was taken to a small village prison staffed mainly by young soldiers. From here he managed to escape and in an attempt to flee the country, made his way to Asmara, where he sought the aid of some friends and fellow Christians.

In what was a terrifying situation, he phoned his family to say goodbye and headed south, out of Asmara, towards the Ethiopian border. Having travelled around 100km, he reached the town of Adi Kaih and again called his wife and family to let them know he was safe. It was here that the authorities caught up with Mussie and after a brief struggle he was re-arrested.

For a long time after his arrest, there was no information regarding his whereabouts or indeed his health, which caused the family grave concern. Local Eritrean Christians feared he had been killed or simply taken to a remote, isolated area of Eritrea and left to suffer in a prison cell somewhere.

Many pastors and church leaders are known to have been in prison at the maximum-security crime investigation unit (*Wenjel Mermera*) in Asmara, some for more than ten years now. Reports indicate that Mussie is also imprisoned here. As with other Christians imprisoned in Eritrea, Mussie has never been tried or charged and so his family simply do not know if, or when, he is likely to be released.

Following his arrest a number of other Christians were detained, allegedly for having helped him in some way.

NEWS AND UPDATE

November 2014: Release's partner, Dr Berhane Asmelash, speaking recently, remarked that in recent months the situation appears to have improved slightly in Eritrea, with fewer arrests and news of some prisoners having been released. He encouraged Christians around the world to continue to pray for Eritrea and for those who remain in prison, many of whom are in poor health and are said to have been subjected to severe mistreatment.

Please pray specifically that Mussie, who has now been separated from his wife and children for more than seven years, will be released and reunited with his family.

Send a card of encouragement to Mussie's wife and family:

Please consider sending a card or letter of encouragement to Mussie to let him know that he is being prayed for. Release will endeavour to forward these cards and letters to his family in Eritrea.

Please write to – The family of Mussie Ezaz, c/o Release International, PO Box 54, Orpington BR5 4RT.

When writing, please do not mention Release International, advance your political opinions or include anything which could be insulting to the authorities.

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Through our international network of missions, Release International serves persecuted Christians in more than 25 countries around the world by supporting pastors and Christian prisoners, and their families; supplying Christian literature and Bibles; and working for justice.

www.releaseinternational.org/prisoners

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