

Ramadan, for many Muslims, marks the calendar for a time of fasting from water and food during the daytime and celebrating with family in the evening; but for Christians, especially those who converted from a Muslim background, the month is often stained by intensified persecution.



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#YEMEN

The situation of Yemen has been repeatedly made international news, especially due to the endless and deadly Yemeni Civil War. Most recently, we were informed about the [Trump-era designation and subsequent Biden-era removal](#) of the Houthi rebels from the United States' list of foreign terrorist organizations. Amidst the political turmoil, however, Christians - particularly those from a Muslim background - face even greater vulnerabilities and hardships.

On 22 February 2021, Jubilee Campaign received an [urgent action petition](#) from local partners [for two Yemeni brothers who were in prison](#). Thankfully, both of the Yemeni brothers have since been released; one of them had served four years in prison. [His crime? Being a Christian.](#)

The second believer, Bashir, was released as we were preparing to send out an urgent petition to the international community regarding his case. Yemeni legislation still stipulates the [death penalty for apostasy](#). Apostasy, the renunciation of a religion - sometimes coinciding with conversion to a new religion, is a fundamental freedom that should not be criminalized. Police had arrested Bashir in February for being 'an apostate from Islam' and subsequently 'preaching Christianity'; he was detained at Criminal Investigation Prison in Taiz Governorate. An online Yemeni newspaper posted [his story](#) online. [An English translation of the article can be found [here](#)]. Bashir's case was also flagged by Mauritanian blogger and human rights activist Cheikh Mkhteir [survivor of the apostasy laws in Mauritania] during Jubilee Campaign's UN Human Rights Council parallel event, ["No Penalty for Apostasy"](#).

Prayer

The examples above are only the cases we know of and can publicly advocate for, but the situation

for Christian converts remains difficult in Yemen. Jihadists have murdered [Christian converts](#) or [perceived apostates](#). In addition, Christian converts can face threats and violence from their own family members. The risk of being exposed as a Christian is always greater during Ramadan, when the majority of society and family cease from eating and drinking and adhere more strictly to outward religious practices.

#SOMALIA

In September 2020 we highlighted the case of a Somali couple who the authorities arrested and later deported for converting to Christianity. [Middle East Concern](#) (MEC) reported that police in Hargeisa, Somaliland had arrested another couple - Mohamed and Hamdi - along with their new born baby and another woman living with them in mid-January 2021, and later also arrested an Ethiopian believer named Aster. In April 2021, MEC now reports that the woman living with the couple and Aster have been released but that the trial remains ongoing against the couple.



Somali Christians ARRESTED in Somaliland | Somali...

Prayer

- Please pray for the couple in custody, and their baby, that they will be released.
- Please also pray for the other believers in Somaliland, that they find courage and strength, especially now as societal pressure is even greater during Ramadan.

#ALGERIA



Police driving congregants out of their church in Tizi-Ouzou Church, Algeria. (Oct 2019)

Authorities in Algeria continue to keep churches closed since 2019 despite international pressure. The majority of the Christians of the Algerian Protestant Church (EPA) are Christians from a Muslim background. As Algerian authorities become more dependent on their outside neighbors - especially as domestic favor wanes amidst the ongoing and persistent national [Hirak protests](#) - local leaders believe the Algerian government remains stringent on church closures in order to keep a good face with neighboring Muslim-majority nations that indirectly punish apostasy and conversion.

Prayer

- Please pray for the reopening of churches in Algeria
- Please pray for encouragement and the grace of God for the Algerian believers as they continue to advocate for their right to worship.
- Please pray for success in the national and international advocacy efforts that are underway.

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