

**IRF Roundtable members to Mali: “Health, Safety and Release of US Humanitarian Aid Worker Kidnapped in Mali Must be Ensured Before Negotiations with JNIM.”**



Photo courtesy of <https://www.bringjeffhome.com/>

***WASHINGTON, D.C., 31 January 2022 – Members of the International Religious Freedom Roundtable in DC, submit letter to the Foreign Minister of Mali, calling for Mr. Woodke’s mental and physical condition to be determined before any negotiations begin with the terrorist group JNIM.***

Jeffery Ray Woodke is an American Missionary from California, was kidnapped by unknown gunmen who were suspected of being Islamic Militants on the evening of October 14, 2016 in Niger. Villagers trailed the kidnapers and reported that they were near the border with Mali at last report.

Mr. Woodke is one of the 66 Americans who are currently being held against their will in 16 countries around the world. Recent information provided to his wife Els Woodke and family suggests that he may be in the custody of Jama’at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) which is a known affiliate of al-Qaeda operating in West Africa specifically in Mali.

In November 2021 Els Woodke asked for help from: "my brothers and sisters in Christ, from the public, and from the governments of Mali and the United States," saying that the situation, "has changed."

Authorities in Mali have been working to have the main Islamic body begin negotiations with JNIM to bring peace to the country. The Roundtable members are urging the Mali authorities to demand proof of Mr. Woodke's mental and physical condition before any negotiations begin and urge that his release be unconditional.

[Download the letter here](#)

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