

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



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**PRIORITY STATUS: TOP  
LEVEL: STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL  
RESONANCE: URGENT**

1<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2011

**MR. ADAMS SUBI WAITARA  
SENIOR RESEARCHER,  
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL  
TANZANIA SECTION  
EASTERN AFRICA AND THE HORN  
P.O. BOX 4331  
DAR ES SALAAM.  
TANZANIA.**

Dear Mr. Adams,

**RE : CONFIDENTIAL MISSION TO THE STATE OF ERITREA.**

On behalf of the Department of African Affairs and of the Executive Committee of Amnesty International based here at the International Secretariat, I wish to announce to you that you have been appointed to be part of a 4 man delegation to Eritrea beginning 6<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

Three of your other colleagues will be as follows:

**MOHAMMED HASSAN NOOR** is of Somali origin but lives in the UK and works at the Amnesty International United Kingdom Section Office. Currently, he is in Nairobi carrying out some projects on behalf of Human Rights Watch.

**MS. CONCEPCION EMPENO** is our Volunteer Senior Investigator and will be coming in as a nun/Catholic Sister and will meet you in Nairobi on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September. She is Philipino in origin.

**KATHRYN ACHILLES** She is based in West Africa but has wide experience in the entire African Continental Affairs. You will meet all of them in Nairobi from 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

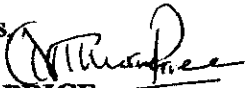
I do believe that with this team and with you as part of it, we shall get quality reports and feedback that we can always rely on.

If the Eritrean Authorities know of this Mission beforehand, we shall have wasted all the resources and we shall not have any ground to stand and criticize them, dictatorships like to take the slightest advantages over anything that happens on their safer side. Let us avoid this.

Remember we have not involved the Eritrean Officials nor are we following official channels, because we believe that the world is very spacious and open, and we do not have to request you to allow us to investigate you. We can do it on our own, in our own way.

Please, check the accompanying attachment for further details. All the logistics for this Mission will be provided in Nairobi at Amnesty International Kenya Section Offices.

Sincerely Yours,



**CATHERINE PRICE,**  
**AFRICA SPECIAL PROGRAMMES,**  
**AI UK SECTION.**  
**LONDON.**

## **BACKGROUND:**

Eritrea is one of the last remaining absolute dictatorships in Africa. Its dictatorship is unique in that the populace has been whipped into total silence and near submission. Since its break up from Ethiopia several years ago, the population has been made to know only one kind of leadership, which is unelected and owes its total loyalty to the President, Mr. Issayas Afewerky.

Mr. Issayas Afewerky has run Eritrea like his own fiefdom, tolerating no voices of dissent, arresting and detaining real and suspected opponents, some as young as ten years old, detaining journalists for their opinions, publishers and printers for printing materials supplied by opposing journalists. In the process Eritrea has produced a substantial number of diaspora personnel more than most of other African countries which were independent more than 40 years ago.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, as a combined force of Human rights Defenders, we have received a reasonable grant from the US State Department to try and work with the oppressed Eritrean people to assist and act on behalf of those unable to make their voices heard.

We know and understand the level and scale of risks involved in such a Mission, especially in a country as closed as North Korea; but the fact that they allow limited entry to a few nationalities we are able to blend ourselves the way that pleases them so that we can enter and meet the people that we can work with on this project. We must begin from somewhere in order to succeed, we cannot abandon our Eritrean colleagues.

The main aim therefore of this Mission to Eritrea is to provide funding and to help in setting up websites and computer centres where people can freely go and chat and exchange ideas and be able to be heard. As a start, ten such Centres will be enough to begin with in Asmara area and by December, we should have covered the entire country.

## CONDITIONS:

\*The Mission must be very discreet and in infirmity, to the extent that none other than you can know that it is going on. All that we do are confidential and **MUST NOT BE IN PUBLIC** domain.

\*Your Mission to Eritrea **MUST** be made in total secrecy to the extent that nobody else can grasp what Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are doing. Any misstep, and you will be arrested in Eritrea!

\* Do not identify yourselves as AI members at any place, be careful with identification and other such particulars.

\* We shall give you the name of the correct hotel in Asmara, though we have learnt it is frequented by government operatives, use your common sense.

\*Let all interviews be organized by the local contacts and processed from within, so that for us we get from you a ready made text from them.

\* Just as soon as you arrive at Asmara Airport, you will notice an atmosphere of cool and quiet, as the population is made to behave in that way all the years. Just behave as they do.

\* Do not operate, at any one time in groups of more than two in the day time, except at night and in a discreet manner. Eritrean Secret Service is everywhere in Asmara.

\* Do not take any photos with normal cameras, except with the micro cameras that will be provided for you when you meet Ms.Concepcion Empenio in Nairobi. These types of cameras can be used everywhere once concealed, and are not machine detected. They are like earphones for the mobile phones.

\*The individuals that you identify to work with in Asmara must be brave, strong hearted and resilient, they must be ready to later mobilize the rest of the internet community in other parts of the country as soon as possible. They should be able to use the money they receive from us in a correct way as intended. Our intended goal is that by December this year, the regime of Issayas Afewerky should be shaking and ready to fall, and we are working on the final details now of an ICC Warrant for crimes against humanity for the President.

\***Mr.Georges Gagnoy**, the Human Rights Watch Africa Director, will be monitoring the events and activities online from Nairobi, and will offer any emergency assistance should it be needed.

## AIM OF THE MISSION:

- To sensitize the Eritrean population into knowing their very basic rights such as to use the internet, to chat freely, to exchange photos and to do social networking.
- To enable this exercise to later bring about change as has happened in other African and Arab countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain.