

## WEA Religious Liberty Prayer News\*

October 1, 2009

*".. have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his plea, O LORD my God, listening to the cry and to the prayer that Your servant prays before You.."*

2 Chronicles 6:19

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*\* World Evangelical Alliance is a global ministry working with local churches around the world to join in common concern to live and proclaim the Good News of Jesus in their communities. God is glorified and the nations of the earth are forever transformed.*

*The purpose of the WEA Religious Liberty Prayer Release is to keep you informed and mobilized in prayer and intercession for the needs of justice and religious liberty in the Church around the globe, so that we can stand together for the work of the Kingdom and the healing of the Nations. The Prayer Release is comprised on the basis of different credible Christian based resources.*

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### "Muslim Militants Slay Long-Time Christian in SOMALIA" [I][1]

*According to a Compass Direct News report, the 69-year-old Somali Christian Omar Khalafe was shot dead on September 15 by Militants from the Muslim extremist militant group "al Shabaab". Omar Khalafe was killed at a checkpoint near the city of Merca, when the militants discovered 25 Somali Bibles in one of the bags on the bus in which he was riding . Khalafe was hoping to deliver the Bibles to an underground fellowship. The Somali martyr had been a Christian for 45 years, active in sharing the Good News and baptizing converts from Islam.*

*Prayer points:*

- ❖ Pray for the wife and the seven children of Omar Khalafe, who mourn his loss.*
- ❖ Pray for the ministry for the Gospel, done by Omar Khalafe among converts from Islam, to continue even stronger after the testimony of his death.*
- ❖ Pray for God's peace in "war-torn Somalia".*

### A pastor killed in NORTHERN NIGERIA[II][2]

*Earle Senn, a member of our WEA network, has sent us a week ago the following update and sad news from Northern Nigeria:*

*"During the recent Boko Haram carnage in some parts of Northern Nigeria where over 20 churches were burnt, the Islamists captured some Christians including a pastor, George Ojih. They were asked to renounce Christianity or be killed. The Pastor said he would never deny Jesus Christ. His captors brought out knives. Before he was slaughtered, he whispered to some of the captives who later escaped that "... tell my family that I died well..." How many Christians could say that? Can you die for your faith?"*  
*On September 11 Nigerian Christians gather to mourn Pastor George Ojih and others who were killed.*

**Prayer points:**

- ❖ *Pray for the families and relatives of Pastor George Ojih and the others killed Christians, God's peace, restoration and comfort to be over them.*
- ❖ *Pray for the Church in Northern Nigeria facing persecution.*
- ❖ *Pray for true religious freedom in the whole country of Nigeria.*

## Modern trends of persecution in UK

*We hear much about the persecution in places like Iran, China, Kazakhstan, but we sometimes do not pay much attention to the persecution happening in the midst of our modern societies, where the unbalanced promotion of wrongly understood "human rights" and "non-discrimination" lead to a different kind of persecution. >From Andrea Minichiello Williams, a barrister and the Director of the Christian Legal Centre, UK[iii][3], we learn for example that Shirley Chaplin, 54, a nurse with 30 years practice from Exeter, was threatened with disciplinary action after refusing to remove a necklace bearing a Cross - a symbol of her Christian faith. Although wearing a Cross has nothing to do with health and safety, the Royal Devon & Exeter Trust Hospital ordered Mrs. Chaplin to remove the item, deeming it a breach of uniform policy and a health risk to her and to patients. Andrea Williams, supporting Mrs. Chaplin in her case, said: "Today, a nurse who has faithfully served members of the public in Exeter with her professional skills was forced, under duress, to agree to stand down from nursing and take up an administrative role, all because the Trust would not permit her to wear a Cross the world-wide, recognised and cherished image of Christianity."*

**Prayer points:**

- ❖ *Pray for Mrs. Chaplin, who has been strong enough not to make compromise with her faith, to be ready to pass through all consequences of her decision with courage and testimony.*
- ❖ *Pray for Andrea Williams, the Christian Legal Center, as well as for the whole team of lawyers, working on behalf of the case of Mrs. Chaplin and on behalf of true freedom of religion and expression in UK.*

- ❖ *Pray for the Church in western society to have strong and distinguished voice, which should be never silenced, in spite of the pressure from wrongly interpreted humanistic culture.*

## **“KAZAKHSTAN: Religious Freedom Survey, September 2009” [iv][4]**

*The Forum 18 News Service release on 23 September 2009 states results of its analysis of freedom of religion or belief in Kazakhstan, revealing continuous violations on part of the Kazakhstan government of its human rights commitments. Documented violations, as stated in the report, include: “attacks on religious freedom by officials ranging from President Nursultan Nazarbaev down to local officials; literature censorship; state-sponsored encouragement of religious intolerance; legal restrictions on freedom of religion or belief; raids, interrogations, threats and fines affecting both registered and unregistered religious communities and individuals; unfair trials; the jailing of a few particularly disfavoured religious believers; restrictions on the social and charitable work of religious communities; close police and KNB secret police surveillance of religious communities; and attempts to deprive religious communities of their property.” Obviously, the country has a long way yet to go in its transition from a totalitarian regime into a democratic state, with true religious freedom and respect for human rights and dignity.*

### *Prayer Points:*

- ❖ *Pray for the persecuted believers in Kazakhstan, for church leaders and communities, not to lose courage and to stay continuously strengthened in the Lord and the power of His might to rescue and deliver.*
- ❖ *Pray in particular for the government of Kazakhstan and its adequate response to an adequate international intervention.*
- ❖ *Pray mainly for God’s sovereign intervention and turnover in the situation in the country.*

## ***International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church 2009***

*We will continue this month supporting in prayer the points, listed at the IDOP-international website ([www.idop.org](http://www.idop.org)). As shared previously,*

*the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP) is an initiative of the Religious Liberty Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance that takes place every November around the world. The prayer focus we will agree about this time is on the communist world, where Christians may face persecution from Communists and governments ideologically opposed to Christianity.*

*Prayer points:*

- ❖ Pray that in China God will give the government divine wisdom in dealing with the immensely complex issues of this large and multi-cultural nation. May there be security with justice, development with sensitivity and may religious freedom be recognized throughout the nation.*
- ❖ Pray that God will be the refuge and strength for the vast number of believers imprisoned in Eritrea and North Korea. Pray for healing for their physical and emotional wounds and that the ever-present Holy Spirit may comfort and counsel their hearts.*
- ❖ Pray for continued church growth in the midst of oppression and suffering in the nations of Vietnam and Turkmenistan. May Christians display the refreshing righteousness of Christ in the midst of nations struggling with corruption, dictatorship and injustice (Philippians 2:12-14). "I praise the Lord that He has never forsaken us." - A formerly imprisoned Vietnamese pastor.*

*✓ Additional prayer items are available at the WEA website, <http://www.worldevangelicals.org/pray/> .*

*✓ Keep in your prayer also the upcoming events and activities of the WEA globally, regionally and nationally, posted at [http://www.worldevangelicals.org/newsletter/july31\\_09.htm](http://www.worldevangelicals.org/newsletter/july31_09.htm)*

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*[i][1] Source: Compass Direct News, available at*

*<http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/somalia/9494/>*

*[ii][2] Source: see more information at [www.sosnigeria.com](http://www.sosnigeria.com)*

*[iii][3] Source: Christian Legal Center release, 21 September, 2009, "Christian Nurse in 'Confirmation Cross Suspension' Forced to Accept Redeployment and will File Claim for Discrimination"*

*[iii][4] Source: Forum 18 News Service, 23 September, 2009 release, available at [http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article\\_id=1352](http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1352)*

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[i][1] Source: *Compass Direct News*, available at <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/somalia/9494/>

[ii][2] Source: see more information at [www.sosnigeria.com](http://www.sosnigeria.com)

[iii][3] Source: *Christian Legal Center* release, 21 September, 2009, "Christian Nurse in 'Confirmation Cross Suspension' Forced to Accept Redeployment and will File Claim for Discrimination"

[iii][4] Source: *Forum 18 News Service*, 23 September, 2009 release, available at [http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article\\_id=1352](http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1352)