



## **Persecution & Prayer Alert**

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada  
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, June 22, 2017

*"Faith is a living and unshakable confidence,  
a belief in the grace of God so assured that a man  
would die a thousand deaths for its sake."*

~ Martin Luther

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### **KENYA: Teacher Fatally Shot at School**

Source: Morningstar News

Suspected al-Shabaab militants walked into an elementary school compound in northeastern Kenya on May 31st, shooting a Christian teacher to death in front of the pupils. Elly Oloo Ojiema was shot at Fafi Primary School, about 100 kilometres from Garissa. After the shooting, the suspected members of the notorious Somali rebel group kidnapped another Christian teacher, Joseph Kamau, along with a Muslim teacher who tried to defend him.

According to the testimony of a colleague, the abducted Muslim teacher announced while trying to shield the Kenyan Christian that he was willing to die with him. The witness further explains: "The al-Shabaab (rebels) got angry and told the teacher, 'We are going to teach you a lesson for protecting the infidels,' and immediately the two were carried away to an unknown destination."

Before escaping the school with the two captured teachers, the militants beat the Muslims of Somali descent merely for housing Kenyan Christians. "We are sounding a warning to you that we shall not take lightly you who are accommodating these infidels," one of the attackers threatened.

The incident has increased concerns among Christians in Garissa, who are already on edge after years of guerrilla assaults by Somali rebels fighting the government in Somalia. A pastors' fellowship in Garissa met on June 2nd and called on the Kenyan government to provide more security. Officials responded by promising to send security guards to protect community members during worship services.

*May the loving comfort of our Lord be powerfully experienced in the lives of the students and teachers -- as well as their families -- who have been affected by the tragic shooting and abductions. Ask Him to protect the two captured teachers as they await their hopeful release,*

*giving them the assurance of His abiding presence while in captivity. Pray that the Christians in Kenya will not succumb to fear, even in the wake of such chaos and hate, but rather hold steadfastly onto God (their "Rock," "Fortress" and "Deliverer"), who promises to be "an ever-present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1; 18:2).*

### **CHINA: Human Rights Lawyer Faces Life Sentence**

Sources: Release International, China Aid, Reuters

Chinese Christian lawyer Jiang Tianyong has not been seen since he disappeared last November. Now the members of his family are told he's been charged with trying to overthrow the regime and, therefore, faces a potential life sentence. Jiang's father received an official statement from the local Public Security Bureau in southern Hunan province informing him that Jiang was charged with "subversion of state power" on May 31st.

Jiang went missing as he returned from visiting the family of a fellow lawyer who had been detained during the July 2015 crackdown on "dissidents." It was initially thought that Jiang was held incommunicado in an illegal "black jail" until his family received this recent news from authorities.

Jiang, a fierce advocate for minorities' religious rights and broader human rights, was charged in December with "inciting subversion of state power" and sentenced to spend time in an unofficial "black jail." However, his family was informed that he is presently being held at Changsha No. 1 Detention Centre -- the first official confirmation of his whereabouts in six months. A previous report announcing China's July 2015 crackdown on religious liberty may be reviewed at [www.vomcanada.com/cn-2015-07-23.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/cn-2015-07-23.htm).

*Please solemnly petition the Lord for the peace and perseverance of Jiang as he awaits trial. May the Holy Spirit fill Jiang afresh, giving him the power and strength he needs to endure. Ask that God's presence and peace will also be upon Jiang's wife, Jin Bianling, and their daughter, who have fled the country to avoid further harassment while awaiting updates on his case. In addition to praying for the release of Jiang, let's be mindful to intercede on behalf of all the other human rights lawyers and activists who have been imprisoned since the 2015 crackdown.*

## **PRAISE REPORT**

### **IRAQ: Abducted Child Reunited with Family!**

Source: Mission Network News

A tragic story that began three years ago now has a miraculously happy ending. You may recall hearing about Christina Abada, the three-year-old girl in Iraq who was kidnapped right out of her mother's arms by ISIS terrorists in August 2014. After three years of separation, and her family fearing the worst, Christina was reunited with her parents and siblings on June 9th. (In addition

to the original report being published in a previous issue of VOM Canada's monthly publication, a subsequent prayer alert was posted as a reminder to continue praying for Christina's protection and safe return to her family: [www.vomcanada.com/iq-2016-09-22.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/iq-2016-09-22.htm).)

When young Christina had been taken, ISIS was starting its sweep of terror in Iraq, going through Mosul and Qaraqosh and targeting minorities -- mostly Christians and Yazidis. Those who didn't escape were given a choice: convert to Islam, pay a protection tax, or die. As Christina's parents were Christians in Qaraqosh, her kidnapping became a focal point worldwide for the horrific persecution Iraqi believers were facing at the hands of ISIS.

Greg Musselman, Minister at Large with The Voice of the Martyrs Canada, met Christina's mother, Ayda, a few years ago in Erbil (a city located within the region of Kurdistan) and was able to hear her story: "They were preparing to leave that part of Iraq and go into Erbil, which was a safer area. Christina was in Ayda's arms when an Islamic soldier came onto the bus...and took Christina away from her mother. Ayda ran after her daughter...but was told that if she didn't get back on the bus, she would be killed right there." (Greg's videotaped interview with Ayda is included in the 15-minute documentary titled, *Iraq: Escaping ISIS*, which can be found on the right side of the above mentioned link.)

After Christina's kidnapping, her traumatized parents met up with the rest of their children who had already fled to Kurdistan. However, they never stopped looking for their abducted child, and a network of friends persisted in searching with them over the years. Then they received the phone call that would change everything. Christina had been found alive and well in Hayy al-Tanak, a neighborhood in Mosul, Iraq.

Greg Musselman says the newly-reunited Abada family is now integrating young Christina back into their lives. But it's going to be a process for the child, who's now nearly six years old: "The little girl, as you can imagine, is totally confused.... (Christina's) traumatized, and she's going to need counselling and help. Ministries like VOM and others will be there to help her." For now, Christina's safe return is a wondrous answer to prayer.

To review the entire *Mission Network News* article, reporting on this recent update, go to [www.mnnonline.org/news/young-girl-kidnapped-isis-three-years-ago-reunited-family](http://www.mnnonline.org/news/young-girl-kidnapped-isis-three-years-ago-reunited-family).

*If you would like to post a prayer of praise or petition on behalf of our persecuted family around the globe, visit VOMC's prayer wall at [www.vomcanada.com/prayerwall.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/prayerwall.htm).*

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The Persecution & Prayer Alert is a ministry of:  
The Voice of the Martyrs Canada, P.O. Box 608, Streetsville, Ontario, L5M 2C1  
Tel. (905) 670-9721 Website: [www.vomcanada.com](http://www.vomcanada.com)

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If you would like to encourage someone to read or receive this weekly prayer alert, please use our online form at [www.vomcanada.com/pnpforward.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/pnpforward.htm) and help spread the message of the persecuted church around the world.

For information on additional ways to support members of the persecuted church overseas, review the list of options at [www.vomcanada.com/take-action.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/take-action.htm).