

9 Christians Murdered for Refusing to Recite Islamic Creed

At least nine Christians were recently murdered in Kenya for not reciting the Islamic statement of faith, the Shahada.

The attack, according to a report by International Christian Concern, occurred about 10 days ago when Christians traveling by bus were separated from their Muslim counterparts and killed in Northeast Kenya. When they would not recite the creed, they were “paraded out of the bus and shot dead at close range by those believed to be al-Shabaab militants.”

“We are deeply saddened to hear of the murders of Kenyan Christians simply going about their day,” said Dede Laugesen, executive director of Save the Persecuted Christians. “Muslims must speak out on these seemingly endless, senseless killings of innocent people holding different beliefs than theirs. Freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right that must be protected and promoted by all for the sake of peace and prosperity. This must end, but it won’t until Muslims en masse demand an end to violence against others in the name of religion, which is generally successful when it does happen.”

One rider attributed his survival to a Muslim passenger who tossed him some Somali clothes to put on when the bus was first hijacked. Because of this, the hijackers assumed he was a Muslim. In August, a group of concerned Muslims thwarted an al-Shabaab attack on Christian workers at a hospital construction site by warning the Christians to flee, and lives were saved.

Save the Persecuted Christians has a mission to save lives and save souls by disseminating actionable information about the magnitude of the persecution taking place globally and by

mobilizing concerned Americans for the purpose of disincentivizing further attacks on those who follow Jesus. One method is through “The People of the Cross” exhibit, which features images, facts and quotes about the persecution of Christians in multiple countries.

The exhibit banner highlighting East Africa reports that “Al-Shabaab originated in Somalia and threatens Christians all over East Africa, claiming to wage ‘jihad against enemies of Islam’—as does the Islamic State, which draws fighters from as far as Minneapolis. Methods of killing vary, but targets and techniques are the same: identifying Christians; order them to recite the Shahada and convert to Islam; and slaughter all who refuse.”

The incident this month, unfortunately, is not isolated. East African jihadists have a history of targeting buses, separating passengers by religious identity and killing the Christians. Other tragic and violent examples include the following:

—In 2018, Fredrick Ngui Ngonde and Joshua Ooko Obila were killed in a similar manner for declining to recite the Islamic creed along the Garissa Masalani road, claiming Christ as their Savior and refusing to betray Him.

—In 2015, 148 students at Garissa University were killed by gunmen after the Muslim students recited the creed and were freed. In the same year, a Muslim teacher, Salah Farah, was shot for defending Christian passengers who were being separated for execution by al-Shabaab.

—In 2014, 28 teachers traveling to Nairobi for the Christmas holiday were killed after being forced to recite the Islamic statement of faith.

Additional banners in “The People of the Cross” exhibit feature countries such as Turkey, where just .02% are Christian due to brutal persecution—down from 20% in 1902, as

well as North Korea, Nigeria, India and China. A majority of the countries highlighted in the banners are high on Open Doors' 2019 World Watch List, including Kenya at No. 40.

This exhibit has been joined by another, "Warfare on Women," released during the 2019 U.S. Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom, which reveals the specific terror-tactic used to demean and degrade female believers to instill fear into the heart of Christian communities. To learn more about hosting a traveling exhibit, contact Save the Persecuted Christians or visit the website, where panels are available to view online.

Reported in Aid to the Church in Need's biannual report on Religious Freedom in the World, at least 327 million Christians experience persecution—a number roughly equal to the current U.S. population. They report 11 Christians are killed every day.

According to Open Doors USA World Watch List, 245 million Christians are victims of high to extreme levels of persecution (such as torture, rape, sex-slavery, expulsion, murder and genocide), an increase of 14% over 2018. Open Doors also estimates 1 in 9 of the world's Christians experience persecution and that every month: 345 Christians are killed, often in public and without regard to gender or age; 219 Christians are abducted and imprisoned indefinitely without trial; and 106 churches are demolished.

Save the Persecuted Christians has developed a dedicated news aggregator—to capture current instances of persecution and to provide readers with an easy way to share these heartbreaking stories with others. Stories are categorized and resource reports are easily accessible.

With so much of the world's Christian population being attacked, imprisoned and/or exiled for their beliefs, such as Christians in East Africa, the need has never been greater for the sort of grassroots campaign STPC's SaveUs Movement is

working to foster. Its efforts are modeled after a miraculously successful one that helped free another population suffering from heavy persecution—Soviet Jews—by penalizing those in the Kremlin responsible for such repression. Through this movement, Save the Persecuted Christians endeavors to provide American policymakers with the popular support they need to effect real change worldwide and alleviate systemically the suffering being experienced by so many of those following Christ.