

Islamic Militants Suspects in Murder of 2 Somali Pastors

Two Somali Christian pastors were murdered Wednesday morning in Kenya. International Christian Concern sources indicate that al-Shabab militants are the prime suspects.

Abdi Weli and another unidentified Christian were shot in a main market in Garissa around 10 a.m. local time. Both were active pastors among Somali immigrants in Kenya. Weli became a Christian in 1990 and was ordained as a pastor in 2004.

Al-Shabab, which currently controls much of Somalia and is active in several parts of Kenya, openly opposes Christianity, enforcing a strict form of Shariah law that calls for the execution of Muslims who leave Islam. Proponents of Sharia are also known to assassinate those who convert Muslims away from Islam.

"Islamists are misguided if they think killing our church leaders will eliminate the community of faith from among the Somali people," a Somali pastor told ICC.

"Somali Christians have endured crushing persecution since the rise of al-Shabab. Violence and oppression naturally arise from the enforcement of Sharia law. Any country or culture contemplating the implementation of Shariah should take note of this incident and countless others like it that demonstrate a complete lack of civility and human respect.

"Furthermore, this story illustrates the very serious situation that Kenya is facing, as militant Islamists from Somalia have infiltrated and control several areas of Kenya. Kenya must deal with this reality or ignore it at their peril," ICC President Jeff King said.