

His Excellency
Isayas Afewerki
President of the State of Eritrea
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Your Excellency;

Please forgive me for taking the liberty of drawing your attention to the fate of the Eritrean Christian, the Reverend Haile Naizgi. This leader of a church network was arrested in Asmara on May 23, 2004. The pastor was initially locked up at a police station and was later on taken to the Wengel Mermera Central Criminal Investigation Center.

In almost 20 years of imprisonment, it has not become known what the pastor is accused of. The Reverend Naizgi actively attempted to have his church officially registered in 2003. The wave of arrests of committed Christians in May of 2003, which includes the arrest of the Reverend Haile Naizgi, obviously contradicts the right to freedom of religion and worship.

I would respectfully remind you, dear Mr. President, of the fact that the State of Eritrea has ratified "The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (ICCPR) in 2002, and that this covenant includes freedom of worship and religion. I therefore humbly beseech you, Excellency, that you do everything in your power to advocate the release of the Reverend Haile Naizgi.

Most respectfully,