

Nuusgebeure van die afgelope week (26 November - 3 Desember 2020):

AL-SHABAAB LOODS MEER AANVALLE IN SOMALIË IN AANLOOP TOT 2021-VERKIESING



Die fundamentalistiese Islamitiese groep, Al-Shabaab, maak aanspraak op verantwoordelikheid vir 'n aanval waarin minstens agt mense op Vrydag, 27 November, in die Somaliese hoofstad, Mogadishu, dood is. Die groep het 'n gewilde roomyswinkel, wat deur toeriste en regerings amptenare besoek word, gebombardeer en beweer dat die aanval "suksesvol en bedrewe uitgevoer is". Dié bomaanval is op Saterdag, 28 November, deur nog een, wat die hoofbestuurder van 'n hawe in Mogadishu geteiken het, opgevolg. Na bewering is twee mense in die tweede aanval

dood en 'n onbekende aantal beseer. Terwyl politieke en sosiale onrus in Somalië voortduur, het Al-Shabaab die afgelope paar weke die frekwensie van aanvalle op Somaliese veiligheidspersoneel en burgerlikes verhoog. Die groep het gedreig om meer aanvalle uit te voer terwyl die land voorbereidings tref vir die verkiesing in 2021. Volgens *Human Rights Watch* se wêreldverslag het voortslepende gewapende konflik, onsekerheid en herhalende humanitêre krisis, tot ernstige onrus in Somalië gelei. Ongeveer 2,6 miljoen van 'n totale bevolking van 11,7 miljoen mense, is op nasionale vlak onthoem. Die Verenigde Nasies se Hulpverlening in Somalië (*UNSOM*) het bereken dat, van Januarie tot middel-November 2020, ongeveer 1,100 slagoffers onder burgerlike slagoffers ongeveer 1,100 beloop; 67% hiervan het voortgespruit uit "blindelinge én doelgerigte aanvalle" wat oorwegend deur Al-Shabaab uitgevoer.

Uit 'n Christelike perspektief: In Somalië word dit as verraad teen die familie en die stam beskou wanneer 'n Moslem 'n volgeling van Christus word. Dusdanige bekeerlinge word dikwels deur gesinslede en stamleiers geïntimideer, aangerand of selfs doodgemaak. Hulle loop ook 'n groter risiko om deur terreurgroepe soos Al-Shabaab geteiken te word. Om in Somalië 'n Christen te word, is op alle lewensterreine baie gevaarlik – hewige vervolging is 'n groot waarskynlikheid. Die voortslepende onrus en geweld het egter miljoene Somaliërs genoop om te vlug; baie van hulle wyk uit na "christelike" lande, soos Amerika, Kanada, Suid-Afrika en verskeie Europese lande. Ongeveer twee derdes van alle Somaliërs wat buite Somalië woon, woon egter in die buurlande Kenia, Ethiopië, Djiboeti en Jemen. Verskeie kerke in Noord-Amerika het bedienings wat toegespits is op Somaliërs wat in hul gemeenskappe woon. State soos Ohio, Minnesota en Kalifornië het groot bevolkings Somaliese vlugtlinge – kerke in hierdie state is daartoe verbind om diegene wat die militante Islam ontvlug het, te help om die Evangelie van Jesus te verneem. Somaliese vlugtlinge wat met hierdie bedienings in aanraking kom, kan die Evangelie dan in 'n nie-vyandige omgewing verneem en leer ken. Só word die Somaliese diaspora aan Jesus blootgestel en diegene wat verkies om Christus te volg, kan die Goeie Nuus moontlik terugneem na hulle lydende volk.

Bid asseblief saam met ons vir die volgende:

- Dat die komende verkiesing nuwe politieke en maatskaplike stabiliteit sal bewerkstellig;
- dat die Somaliese diaspora die Evangelie sal leer ken en verstaan; en
- dat Christene in Somalië, te midde van politieke onstabilditeit, sosiale onrus en ernstige vervolging, standvastig sal bly.

Foto: REUTERS /Feisal Omar

In the news this past week (26 November – 3 December 2020):

AL-SHABAAB INCREASES ATTACKS IN SOMALIA IN LEAD-UP TO 2021 ELECTIONS

The Islamist fundamentalist group al-Shabaab claimed an attack that killed at least eight people on Friday 27 November in the Somali capital of Mogadishu. The group bombed a popular ice-cream shop that is frequented by tourists and government officials, claiming the attack was “successful and well-executed.” That bombing was followed by another on Saturday 28 November that targeted the general manager of a port in Mogadishu. Two people were reportedly killed in the second attack, and an unknown number were injured. Al-Shabaab has increased the frequency of attacks on Somali security personnel and civilians over the past few weeks as political and social unrest in Somalia continues. The group has threatened to carry out more attacks as the country prepares for elections in 2021. According to *Human Rights Watch’s* world report, ongoing armed conflict, insecurity, and recurring humanitarian crises have led to serious unrest in Somalia. Out of a population of 11.7 million people, approximately 2.6 million are internally displaced. The United Nations Assistance Missions in Somalia (UNSOM) calculated over 1,100 civilian casualties from January to mid-November 2020, with 67% of those coming from “indiscriminate and targeted attacks,” the majority of which have been carried out by al-Shabaab.

From a Christian perspective, for a Muslim in Somalia to become a follower of Christ is viewed as a betrayal of the family and the clan. Family members and clan leaders will often intimidate, attack, or even kill such people. They also face an increased risk of being targeted by terrorist groups such as al-Shabaab. In all spheres of life in Somalia, becoming a Christian is extremely dangerous, with a high probability of severe persecution. However, the ongoing unrest and violence have driven millions of Somalis to flee, many heading for ‘Christian’ nations such as the United States, Canada, South Africa, and various European countries (though about two thirds of all Somalis who live outside Somalia live in the neighbouring countries of Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen). Several churches in North America have dedicated ministries reaching out to Somalis living in their communities. States like Ohio, Minnesota, and California have large populations of Somali refugees, and churches in these states are committed to helping those who have fled militant Islam to know the Gospel of Jesus. Somali refugees who encounter these ministries are able to hear and come to understand the Gospel in a non-hostile environment. In this way, the Somali diaspora is exposed to Jesus and those who choose to follow Christ could possibly take the Good News back to their hurting nation.

Pray with us for the following:

- For the upcoming elections to bring about a new political and social stability
- For the Somali diaspora to come to know and understand the Gospel
- For Christians within Somalia to remain steadfast amid political instability, social unrest, and severe persecution

Image: REUTERS/Feisal Omar