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**TEENAGER HELD FOR NINE YEARS**

**ERITREA: CIHAM ALI AHMED**

Ciham Ali Ahmed is a dual US-Eritrean national, born in Los Angeles and raised in Eritrea. She had plans to become a fashion designer when she grew up.

On 8 December 2012, when Ciham was 15 years old, she was arrested at the Sudanese border as she tried to flee Eritrea.

Prior to her arrest, Ciham’s father Ali Abdu, then the minister of information under President Isaias Afwerki, went into exile, just as the military attempted a coup against the government. It was rumoured that he had supported the coup and Ciham may have been arrested in retaliation.

**Eritrea is notorious for imprisoning people in underground containers. Many detainees have died from torture, starvation, infection and other appalling treatment.**

**Although Ciham is a US citizen, she has so far been ignored by the US government, which has stayed silent on her plight, even though it has the power to influence Eritrea.**

Nine years after her arrest, Ciham has never been charged or brought to trial and her family do not know where she is being held.

**TAKE ACTION:**

**Send a letter calling on the US Secretary of State to urgently intervene in the case by calling for Ciham Ali Ahmed’s immediate and unconditional release.**

**You can also send a message of support and solidarity to Ciham’s family as part of the** [**Write for Rights campaign**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2021-10/Write%20for%20Rights%20Booklet%202021.pdf?VersionId=VCT8OFbpKGiv6VjrtsY5nOCEk1QgGHVG)**.**

**TEMPLATE LETTER**

US Secretary of State

Antony Blinken

2201 C St. NW

Washington, DC 20520

US

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing to express my concern at the arrest and disappearance of Ciham Ali Ahmed in Eritrea.

Ciham Ali Ahmed, a US citizen born in Los Angeles and raised in Eritrea, has been missing since 8 December 2012, when she was arrested at the Eritrean border when she was 15 years old. Nine years on and no one knows where Ciham is.

Please intervene in this case and call for Ciham Ali Ahmed’s immediate and unconditional release.

Yours sincerely,

**SOLIDARITY ACTION**

**You can send Ciham’s family a message of support and solidarity.**

***Language:* English or Tigrinya**

***Send your message:***

**C/o Eritrea Team**

**Amnesty International**

**1 Easton Street**

**London**

**WC1X 0DW**

***Please don’t send a religious card, send an Amnesty card, mention Amnesty or include your name and address.***