



## AMERICA TEAM ASSISTS ERITREAN REFUGEES IN DANGER IN LIBYA

Peace keeping forces are needed in Libya to protect the innocent,  
including Eritrean refugees.

March 2, 2011 The America Team for Displaced Eritreans was contacted two weeks ago by representatives of a group of 80 refugees in Libya who had been referred to the US government by UNHCR for resettlement in the US. The process had bogged down because the Libyan government would not issue visas for members of the US Homeland Security interviewing team to enter the country. The America Team was in the midst of seeking ways to get the refugees out of Libya, to a country where the required investigations could be continued.

It was at that time that all communications with people in Libya came to a stop as general unrest in the country boiled over into civil rebellion, and telephone and Internet connectivity were stopped by the government in order to hinder planning by the opposition.

Then on February 27<sup>th</sup>, we heard from the group of 80 who said that they were in hiding, running out of food and water, afraid to come out because black Africans were subject to being shot on sight, under assumption that they were mercenaries like those brought in from black African nations. We alerted an international organization assisting refugees in Libya, and provided contact information for the group.

Several hours later, we called the group and were delighted to learn that they had heard that an evacuation ship was coming and they were to go to the port and register – and they made their way there.

We contacted the leader of the group on March 1<sup>st</sup> and learned that the opportunity was only a false rumor and that the group was back in hiding.

We also heard at about the same time, from an Eritrean in California who said that his brother was in Libya with 9 others, again running out of supplies and needing medicine. The America Team has contacted the group which is holed up in a house, and unable to leave because danger facing black Africans seen in public. The Team has contacted an international organization and others working on the ground in Libya, in efforts to get aid the group. A priest working in Tripoli on assignment from the Vatican has now contacted the group. We have put the two groups in touch with each other.

The Eritrean refugees fear for their lives not only because of assumed association with black African mercenaries, but because of feelings against all refugees in the country for cost of jobs and load on the people, and general prejudice against black Libyans themselves.