



Daniel Eyosab is a 25-year-old man from Eritrea. When we meet him during an event at the European Parliament, it is impossible to imagine what he has been through to make it all the way to Brussels.

Having graduated from high school Daniel was recruited to the Eritrean army. After serving at the army he returned to college - but after 4 years of studies, he was assigned to the military. He tried to escape and managed to reach the Eritrean-Sudanese border, where Sudanese soldiers told him he would be transported to a UNHCR refugee camp.

Unfortunately that was not the case. Daniel was transported to the Sinai peninsula with a group of 22 other people, many of them women and children.

The journey to a trafficking camp in Northern Sinai took 11 days. At the camp Daniel was chained together with a group of other immigrants. He was tortured and forced to call his family in Eritrea while being tortured. The family had no choice but to collect the ransoms of 5500 USD

after hearing his screams.

Many hostages die in the Sinai as a result of trafficking and the related torture. Daniel witnessed two people in his chain die. Their dead bodies weren't removed from their chains until several days had passed.

Daniel, however, was lucky to survive the trafficking cycle. He was sold to another camp where he spent 2 months and finally made it to Israel where he has spent more than a year in an "open facility." The Israeli Prevention of Infiltration Law, however, treats all irregular border-crossers as "infiltrators." The law states that the detention of irregular border-crossers falls under an administrative procedure that does not guarantee them access to a lawyer to challenge their detention.

What happened to Daniel is unfortunately not unique. Thousands face torture or death in Sinai when trying to migrate to Europe or to the Middle-East.

It is estimated that 25000-30000 people were victims of Sinai trafficking between 2009 and 2013. The figure includes those that have died, disappeared and survived and those currently being held in Sinai.

The value of the ransoms paid in the last five years is estimated to be around 600 million USD.

A recent study named [\*The Human Trafficking Cycle: Sinai and Beyond\*](#) defines the Sinai trafficking cycle as a circular and closed system in which refugees are trapped. Once caught in the trafficking cycle, there is no way out. Persecuted in their own country, people flee to refugee camps where they risk being recruited or abducted to be trafficked and tortured in Sinai.

If the refugees survive Sinai, they face detention or are returned to country they tried to escape from. Those trying to migrate further are forced to take even greater risks to reach safety. The refugees have little chance of being granted asylum. With little options for regularizing their status in the host country many end up living on the fringes of society.

“What is happening in Sinai is horrible. It is not something that should be happening today,” commented Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner for Home Affairs, at the closing of the event.