Where in the World is Eritrea?
Dangerous Place in Africa

**I was reading an article titled, "*Vietnam accused of widespread human rights abuses*
" on
Fox News
this morning.**

It was actually the last sentence of the article that caught my attention. It read,

"*The State Department's official list of countries of particular concern includes Myanmar, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Uzbekistan* ." I noticed the country, Eritrea, and I wondered where in the world it was.

According to the Department of State Fact sheet on Eritrea it is a poor East African country that was formerly a province of Ethiopia that struggled for 30 years to win their independence. Border crossings between the two countries are heavily occupied by military and the borders remain closed.

Americans are being warned to avoid this region as numerous landmines have been reported and walking or hiking in the region has been deadly for many. The State Department issued the following warning:

"While you are in Eritrea, you are subject to its laws even if you are a U.S. citizen. In some places, it is illegal to take pictures of certain buildings and currency exchange on the street is illega **l."**

Tourists have been jailed without explanation because they unknowingly broke the laws of the land. Once incarcerated, they find themselves in jail cells that are cramped, filthy and without toilets.

Why would anyone risk going to Eritrea?
It is mostly missionaries who travel to this poor country (about the size of Pennsylvania) that borders the Red Sea. The hot and very dry desert temperatures resemble Arizona but are cooler and wetter in the central highlands. The total population is just under 6 million with nearly half of them under the age of 14.

The State Department describes Eritrea as not just a poor country rather a "*desperately poor country*."

Another sad statistic about this desperately poor nation is that, "t*he Government of Eritrea does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so* **."**