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Eritrean Man Accused of Threatening Family Allowed to Remain in UK Pending Extradition Battle

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An Eritrean national accused of threatening to torture his wife and children is fighting extradition to Norway while living in taxpayer-funded accommodation in the United Kingdom (UK). The case has prompted renewed debate over how the government manages individuals facing serious criminal allegations abroad and the cost to the public purse when such proceedings are drawn out.

According to court reporting by *CourtNewsUK* on 8 August 2025, Andemariam Zeselase is alleged to have committed threats, assault, and maltreatment of his wife and two young children between September 2020 and December 2023 in Norway. Prosecutor Darren Watts, representing the Norwegian authorities, described the alleged offences as “unpleasant, coercive, and controlling.” He is contesting extradition to Norway.

The court heard he has been accommodated by the Home Office while proceedings continue. Before entering the UK, Zeselase had lived in Norway for two years as an asylum seeker, but his visa expired following the breakdown of his marriage. His solicitor, Frank Brazell, told the court that his client preferred not to face trial in Norway and had sought asylum in Britain instead.

Zeselase required the assistance of an Eritrean interpreter to confirm his details in court, with his lawyer noting that he has no community ties in the UK and struggles to communicate in English. A formal accusation warrant was issued by the Norwegian authorities, and Zeselase denies all allegations. District Judge Briony Clarke presided over the hearing. The court refused bail, citing the seriousness of the allegations and limited ties, according to reporting.

The case comes against the backdrop of long-running concerns about the pace of extradition proceedings in the UK. Under the Extradition Act 2003, the UK has formal arrangements with Norway, as both countries are part of the European Convention on Extradition. However, cases can be delayed by legal challenges, human rights claims, or asylum applications, sometimes allowing those accused of serious crimes overseas to remain in the UK for extended periods.

Critics argue that such cases highlight weaknesses in immigration enforcement, particularly where the accused has no established right to remain in the country. They question why public resources are allocated to accommodating individuals facing serious accusations abroad, rather than prioritising swift resolution and return to the requesting jurisdiction.

Supporters of a firmer stance on extradition say the government should ensure that foreign nationals accused of violent offences abroad are promptly returned to face justice. They warn that prolonged cases risk undermining public confidence in the justice and immigration systems, while also increasing costs to taxpayers.

Zeselase remains in custody, with a further court date expected next week. His legal challenge and the government's decision to continue providing accommodation during the process are likely to keep the case in the public spotlight and fuel debate over the balance between legal rights, public safety, and the responsible use of public funds.