

Stand UP For DEMOCRACY

August 2006

Coalition For Unity and Democracy Support Group Arizona Newsletter

Vol. 1 Issue 2

US CONGRESSMAN SMITH'S BILL HR5680 CALL TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS END POLITICAL CRISIS, RESPECT HUMAN RIGHT IN ETHIOPIA

300 DAYS OF CAPTIVITY



Some Of Coalition For Unity and Democracy Party (CUDP) Leaders and members Languishing in Prison Since November of 2005

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On the one-year anniversary of Ethiopia's general elections, Rep. Chris Smith – Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations – said it



is imperative that the Government of Ethiopia release all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. Smith also noted the importance of negotiating with the two main political party coalitions to end the stalemate on the limited rights of opposition members of Parliament and investigating killings of protestors by government forces.

"Prime Minister Meles Zenawi played down the government shooting of protestors in June 2005 and despite having enough to arrest those responsible," said Smith, who went to Ethiopia last summer. "Now, one year after the

election that could have brought so much hope to Ethiopia, the shootings remain uninvestigated and political party leaders are still held without trial on spurious charges."

The May, 2005 elections were widely acknowledged to be the most open elections ever held in Ethiopia. After millions of voters turned out at the polls expecting to make a change, unrest among Ethiopia's 72 million citizens began within weeks of the conclusion of the legislative elections. Early partial results indicated that the opposition parties won nearly 200 seats. However, the official government results – finally released in September, showed that the major opposition groups – the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) and the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF) – won 175 seats.

An unknown number of Ethiopians, including minors, have been jailed for protesting the delayed

election results and limitations on the rights of opposition Members of Parliament. Though many prisoners have been released, party leaders, human rights activists and journalists remain imprisoned. Prisoners continue to be held on a variety of charges, including "outrages against the Constitution" and "genocide."

Human rights organizations have expressed concern about claims of torture made in a recent Federal High Court hearing by several prisoners. Though the court ordered that detainees should receive medical treatment following the charges of abuse, there remains no commitment by the government to investigate the allegations.

"My bill, the Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Advancement Act, empowers Ethiopia to establish basic human rights and continue on the path toward democracy by instituting electoral and

governmental reform," said Smith, who noted that the bill would also provide for an investigation by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture."

The Smith bill HR 5680– the Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Advancement Act of 2006 – passed the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations unanimously on April 6th and is awaiting vote in the house of representative.



Some of over 20 Journalist Prison-

THE WORLD MUST ACT NOW

Page 4 for more detail

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www.savenega.org

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EDITORIAL

Let US Mobilize To Free Political Prisoners

The Ethiopian dream of a peaceful transition of political power was shattered by the brutal force of the Ethiopian government. Many innocent lives were lost; opposition leaders and supporters, journalists and civic society leaders are languishing in jail with tramped up charges. The long agonizing court process, planned not to end, is turning into a circus. The international community's attempt to intervene is not bearing fruit.

The election of May 2005, no matter what the government wants to make it, is the beginning of the end of governing Ethiopia by force. Those who aspire to challenge this reality will not succeed. Representative government elected by the people and for the people is the one and only form of government that can survive. Nothing will stop the choice of the people!

In the aftermath of the election, the tyrannical Ethiopian regime carried out the classical method of circumventing the aspiration of the populace to prolog its rule for the unforeseeable future.

We have to pause for a moment and reflect what the people of Ethiopia, for the first time in history, decided to choose to determine their fate and the fate of their country. Instead of ignoring their choice by brutal force, the ruling party must submit to the wishes of the people who have been a pawn for one dictator to another through out their history. All political parties must respect the vote of the people and refrain from speaking for them. The ruling regime must understand the rush to change the out come of the election would not bring any legitimacy, but more resistance both within and outside its own circle. It is wise for any one who aspires to govern the people to earn legitimacy from the people.

The irony now is the legitimately elected CUD leaders are incarcerated by illegitimate leaders. Instead of wasting our time arguing, Ethiopians all over the world must individually and as a group let all responsible governments, institutions and the public know about the crime against humanity committed in Ethiopia every day. We need to let them know their relationship with the government in power and the assistance they give only prolongs the misery of the hundreds of prisoners of conscience and the population as a whole.

We need to make all responsible parties be aware of their atrocities. What they are doing is a crime against humanity, which they will be personally accountable. Those who work for the government need to know their loyalty should rest with the people of Ethiopia not with the ruling party. Serving tyranny is not the best career choice for them.

We need to lobby governments other than the US government to introduce a bill similar to H.R. 5680. This is the most effective way to make the government of Ethiopia accountable for violating international human right rules, committing crime against humanity, violating civil liberties, quashing the freedom of the press, and ignoring the investigation of massacres such as the one in the aftermath of the election, and the genocide committed on the Anuak community in Western Ethiopia.

We, Ethiopians, must turn up the heat by organizing ourselves to publicize the atrocities being committed on the people of Ethiopia. We need to add awareness to the people of the world to pressure their respective governments to take concrete actions against the ruling party of Ethiopia.

OPINION

Why The Ethiopian Government Undermining Bill HR5680?

The Bill – H.R. 5680 - introduced by Rep. Chris Smith – Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operation - after he returned from a fact finding trip to investigate the election of May 2005 and the aftermath of the killing of demonstrators, the jailing of political leaders, civil society members and opposition supporters is a straight forward bill. It intends to promote democratic institution, sanction offenders and make leaders accountable for the atrocities committed during and after the election. Yet, the government of Ethiopia which receives more than half of its budgetary requirement from donors is willing to hire a public relation firm - DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary - for \$50,000 a month to provide services to the Ethiopian government on legislative and public relations matters. This is according to the highly reliable Indian Ocean Newsletter (ION) of June 17, 2006. The newsletter reports, "Samuel Assefa had hardly been inaugurated as Ethiopian Ambassador to the United States when he embarked on a lobbying campaign"

The bill, which clearly outlines the implementation of basic human rights and the strengthening of democratic institutions, should have been supported with open arms instead of opposing it vigorously by hiring an expensive public relation firm the country can ill afford.

Further, the government, through its embassy and councilor is said to galvanize unsuspecting Ethiopian Americans to sign a prepared petition to their representatives in Congress to oppose H.R. 5680.

What motivates a government which can hardly feed its population spend over six hundred thousand dollars per year to hire a PR firm in Washington to lobby the United State Congress to undermine the human rights bill?

The government through its embassies and affiliated media called for a rejection of the bill by telling Ethiopian Americans to oppose the bill claiming, "Relationships between Ethiopia and the U.S. should be guided by a spirit of mutual respect, as reflected in the many facets of cooperation in the war against terror and in support of U.S. policies against Islamic fundamentalism, particularly in the sensitive and volatile

neighboring areas of Somalia and the Sudan. Just recently, for example, the National Bank of Ethiopia sponsored a two-day regional workshop in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in support of the global program against the financing of terrorism and money laundering", and telling its supporters to send a copy of the petition to the Embassy of Ethiopia.

What do drugs, crime, global terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism have to do with the human rights bill? In fact, the bill supports "collaboration to fight global war on terror"

It outlines the following five items as basis for the bill.

"It is the policy of the United States to—

(1) *Support the advancement of human rights, democracy, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press, peacekeeping capacity building, and economic development in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia;*

(2) *Collaborate with Ethiopia in the Global War on Terror;*

(3) *Seek the unconditional release of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Ethiopia;*

(4) *Foster stability, democracy, and economic development in the region; and*

(5) *Strengthen United States-Ethiopian relations based on the policy objectives specified in paragraphs (1) through (4)"*

Then why would the government of Ethiopia waste substantial amounts of money to lobby against a human rights bill introduced by the honorable Republican Congressman Smith who personally investigated the political repression, killing, jailing and harassment of the opposition?

•The US and the world must stand up against tyrants who rule by impunity with disregard to human life, and who misappropriate funds for unnecessary expenditure while asking assistance to feed their people over and over again.

The fifty thousand dollar expenditure per month to hire a lobby firm against a human right bill can be better spent for the many problems the country faces in health care, famine, and education. It is time to make tyrants accountable for their atrocities and the misappropriation of public funds.

Democracy: Lesson Learned

CUDP: The Way of Peace and Ethiopiawinet

Girma G Kassa (Chicago)
August 4, 2006

It has been 14 months since the people have spoken for Peace and "Ethiopiawinet" and 270 long days since the people's Leaders have been incarcerated. The ghosts of war and blood shed are circling around our land. Various groups are organizing themselves to confront the EPRDF militarily for they think it is the only language it understands. The ruling party has been gearing up to sacrifice the lives of young Ethiopians in Somalia in an attempt to gain favors from its "lords". In Northern Ethiopia tense military build ups are continuing. All these shows that the cloud on top of our land is a cloud of blood shed and war.

The Spirit of war, hate, revenge and tribalism are controlling systematically the hearts and minds of some of us. We are being possessed by demons. We are heading into the wrong direction. Tribal groups whose foundations and principles are anything, but "Ethiopiawinet" are taking the stage. Where are the voices of reason, peace and reconciliation? Where is the alternative to war? Where is the alternative to ethnic and tribal politics? Where is the alternative to revenge? Where is the alternative to hate?

Dear Fellow Ethiopians, I have a good news. There is an alternative that Ethiopians had never had before, but has been introduced by KINIJIIT. CUDP/KINIJIIT has shown a unique and dynamic alternative to solving our problems. The alternative of CUDP/Kinijit is an alternative of peace, love, Ethiopiawinet and reconciliation. The alternative of CUDP/Kinijit is an alternative where disputes are resolved with civil dialogue

Dear fellow Ethiopians:
When Kinijit presented its alternative to the people many thought it was a foolish alternative that do not deserve support. Many thought it was a waste of time and energy. On May 7th 2005 more than 3 million people came out in full force to rally behind Kinijit and to show their overwhelming endorsement for Kinijit and its programs On May 15th 2005, Ethiopians all over the land reaffirmed again their support with their ballot. Ethiopians said No to war, No to hate, No

to revenge and No to ethnic politics.

The alternative of CUDP/Kinijit has been so convincing that the EPRDF could not handle it anymore. Without an army, security forces and the support of outside powers CUDP/Kinijit has been able to stand against the power of evils.

CUDP/Kinijit is no longer just a political party. It has become a movement and the symbol of Ethiopiawinet and peaceful resistance. From Kaliti Prison, the Vice Chairwoman of Kinijit, Judge Birtukan Mideksa wrote: "Kinijit was just an alternative political party before the election debates. Its transformation to being the spirit of resistance



CUDP Leaders Being Escorted Out of Court by Armed Security Agents

against tyranny was both dramatic and intense. As this spirit chews Ethiopians at home and abroad, our nation can no longer be tamed." CUDP/Kinijit has transformed itself from being a political party to being a movement. Some may want to see it only as a political party. Some may

There is a choice to make here. There are two twin roads. One road is the road that leads to destruction and misery. There is another road that leads to Peace, Democracy and Ethiopian Unity. The road that CUDP/Kinijit took is the road of Peace. Let us all support CUDP/Kinijit and fulfill our historic responsibility.

want to see it go away all together. However, CUDP/Kinijit has a unique and invincible place in the heart of the majority of Ethiopians. All Ethiopi-

ans who aspire for freedom, human dignity and "Ethiopiawinet" are embracing CUDP/Kinijit. All Ethiopians who are tired of the politics of hate and division have given thumbs up to CUDP/Kinijit.

"On the first day of November, EPRDF's security men dragged the leaders of CUDP/Kinijit away from our homes and assigned us a new home, at prison, hoping that the ignited flame of liberation would have stopped flickering soon", explained Judge Birtukan Mideksa. The EPRDF may have thought it would silence this movement. Meles may have put his confidence on his

Agazii troops. However, the movement expanded and reached out to millions with dramatic speed. Judge Birtukan added: "Our incarceration hasn't liquidated the spirit of freedom. Instead, it degrades those who are fighting against it into something hateful and undignified. Toughened by the crack down on dissent and other forms of oppression, other democrats, genuinely committed to the cause of liberty, and equality are emerging"

It is right, the EPRDF forces have locked up our heroes and heroines. It is right, CUDP/Kinijit

Leaders in Kaliti are facing unbearable pains and heavy discomfort in their cell. It is right, their children are deprived quality time with their fathers and mothers locked up in Kaliti. It is right their families are economically hurt. However, millions of Eng. Hailu Shawels, Birtukan Mideksas, Muluneh Eyuels, Professor Mesfin Woldemariam and Dr Berhanu Negas have been produced. We are all the new Dr Yacobs, Dr Befekadus, Dr. Hailus, Eng. Gizachews and Woiz. Nigists---all democrats dedicated to the peaceful struggle for democratic governance, human rights and the rule of law to take hold in our beloved Motherland.

CUDP/Kinijit has introduced a new politics. A letter from Kinijit Leaders in Kaliti says: "Kinijit's open-minded, inclusive and accommodating politics has received great support from the public. There is no way back to the old sickness of divisive politics". The new politics of CUDP/Kinijit is a politics of open-mindedness, inclusiveness and accommodation. Creative ideas, suggestions and recommendations are welcomed. Criticism and dissents are valued. CUDP/Kinijit is open and accommodating. It is

“Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy, and Human Rights Advancement Act of 2006”

Excerpt from Bill HR 5680 109TH
CONGRESS 2D SESSION

To encourage and facilitate the consolidation of security, human rights, democracy, and economic freedom in Ethiopia. JUNE 26, 2006

This Act may be cited as the “Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy, and Human Rights Advancement Act of 2006”. It is the policy of the United States to—

- (1) Support the advancement of human rights, democracy, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press, peace-keeping capacity building, and economic development in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia;
- (2) Collaborate with Ethiopia in the Global War on Terror;
- (3) Seek the unconditional release of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Ethiopia;
- (4) Foster stability, democracy, and economic development in the region; and
- (5) Strengthen United States-Ethiopian relations based on the policy objectives specified in paragraphs (1) through (4).

The Department of State, in its 2005 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, noted a myriad of human rights abuses by the Government of Ethiopia. Moreover, journalists and editors of the independent press have been and continue to face harassment and prosecution for alleged violations of press laws in Ethiopia. Dozens of journalists have fled the country, and some are currently in exile fearing prosecution or harassment

In June 2005, more than 35 demonstrators were killed by Ethiopian Government security personnel. Tens of thousands of people suspected of being opposition supporters were detained over the past months, although many of these detainees were released. Nonetheless, government security forces continue to abuse opposition leaders, supporters, and family members.

An estimated 112 political leaders, human rights activists, community leaders, and

journalists, including the chairman of the CUD (Hailu Shawel), the newly elected Mayor of Addis Ababa (Berhanu Nega), and the founder of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam), were imprisoned and charged with treason and genocide. These measures were deliberately taken to stifle and criminalize opposition party activity in the country. The measures also were intended to intimidate and silence independent press and civil society, rising serious question about the Ethiopian Government’s commitment to democracy and good governance.

SEC. 4. SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA.

The Secretary of State shall—

- (1) Establish a mechanism to provide financial support to local and national human rights groups and other relevant civil society organizations to help strengthen human rights monitoring and regular reporting on human rights conditions in Ethiopia;
- (2) establish a program to provide legal support for political prisoners and prisoners of conscience and to assist local groups or groups from outside Ethiopia that are active in monitoring the status of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Ethiopia;
- (3) seek to increase the independence of the Ethiopian judiciary through facilitation of joint discussions for court personnel, officials from the Ethiopian Ministry of Justice, relevant members of the legislature, and civil society representatives on international human rights standards;
- (4) create and support a judicial monitoring process, consisting of local and international groups, to monitor judicial proceedings throughout Ethiopia, with special focus on unwarranted government intervention on strictly judicial matters, and to investigate and report on actions to strengthen an independent judiciary;
- (5) establish a program to strengthen private media in Ethiopia, provide support for training purposes, offer technical and other types of support as necessary, and expand programming by the Voice of America to Ethiopia; and
- (6) establish a

mechanism to identify and extradite members of the Mengistu Haile Mariam regime and the current government residing in the United States who were engaged in gross human rights violations and work with other governments to identify and extradite such persons, including MengistuHaile Mariam.

SEC. 5. SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIZATION IN ETHIOPIA.

(a) STRENGTHENING LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES.—

The Secretary of State shall—(1) provide assistance to strengthen local, regional, and national parliaments and governments in Ethiopia through training in consultation with government authorities, political parties, and civil society groups; (2) establish a program focused on reconciliation efforts between the Government of Ethiopia and peaceful political and civil society groups, including in minority communities, in preparation for negotiation and for participation in the political process; (3) strengthen training for political parties in Ethiopia in areas such as organization building and campaign management; (4) provide training for civil society groups in election monitoring in Ethiopia; and (5) facilitate ongoing communications between the Government of Ethiopia through the National Election Board (NEB) in order to address issues such as delimitation of constituencies, voter registration, political party registration, candidate registration, and related matters to enhance the credibility of the next elections in Ethiopia.

(b) DEMOCRACY ENHANCEMENT.—(1) ASSISTANCE.—United States technical assistance for democracy promotion in Ethiopia should be made available to the ruling party as well as opposition parties in Ethiopia. (2) RESTRICTION.—(A) IN GENERAL.—Nonessential United States assistance shall not be made available to the Government of Ethiopia if the Government of Ethiopia acts to obstruct United States technical assistance to advance human rights, democracy, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press, economic development and

CUDP: The Way of Peace ...

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not a club of the privileged where only the few are allowed to talk and to be listened. CUDP/Kinijit is open to all.

The accommodating principles of CUDP/Kinijit might innocently be taken by some as compromising one's principles. CUDP/Kinijit Leaders have offered an olive branch even to EPRDF members. For CUDP/Kinijit no Ethiopian is an enemy of Ethiopia. CUDP/Kinijit is for an Ethiopia where everyone could freely express his/her ideas and contribute to his country. This is KINIJI!

There is a choice to make here. There are two twin roads. One road is the road that leads to destruction and misery. There is another road that leads to Peace, Democracy and Ethiopian Unity. The road that CUDP/Kinijit took is the road of Peace. Let us all

support /CUDP/Kinijit and fulfill our historic responsibility. Let us work for one and unique Ethiopia whose people are equally respected regardless of ethnic affiliation, religion, gender and age. Let us speak loud and clear that WAR and HATE are behind us.

For far too long, we have been looking for others to sacrifice for us, for too long we have been hiding behind the suffering of others, for too long we have been hiding in our closets and avoiding responsibility, for too long we have been benefiting by the demise of others, for much too long we have been silent on our country's affairs. The release of CUDP/Kinijit Leaders, respect for the rule of law, freedom of the press and the release of the jailed journalists, human right activists and all prisoners of conscience, the unity

of our country and peace and stability should matter to ALL Ethiopians. If these things that matter most do not move us from our silence as Martin Luther King Jr. said we are dead. The great civil rights leader said: "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." Silence is not acceptable! Ethiopia cannot afford the activism of its enemies and the silence of its children

Ethiopia will prevail! The Almighty God will save Ethiopia. The leaders who are currently languishing in prison will be free. As Dr. Martin Luther King said, "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

May the Almighty God keeps our Leaders in Kaliti safe!

Mr. Obang O. Metho Director of International Advocacy, Anuak Justice Council (AJC) Addressing His Compatriot in Los Angeles CA July 5, 2006

"Take Courage, Get Involved And Work Together As Ethiopians"

"One thing we have learned is that the government is killing, arresting, torturing, and imprisoning every one of

us regardless of our ethnic group or the region from which we come. Your only option for some degree of safety is to say nothing, to do nothing or to actively

side with the government against your own people. We have come to realize that our government is especially preying on the educated, the human rights activists, the politicians and anyone who is asking for God-given rights for Ethiopians. Instead, our government is taking these God-given rights from our people every day, even as I speak to you, someone will be arrested, tortured and killed.

It seems like there is a lot of talking, but no action. This is why I want to change the focus from talking to taking action. I encourage you to do the same. That is also why I am grateful to the organizers of this conference who are bringing us together to start doing something or our people will suffer the consequences of our inaction.

Action is already long overdue, but now we know much more about the opponent we face.

For me, as a human rights activist, I will not go for the choice of losing more lives of our fellow Ethiopians. Our people are dying already from HIV, malaria, starvation and water-borne diseases. We do not want any more wasted human lives taken from us before their rightful time. Every Ethiopian life is precious. When I say this, I am not only defending the lives and the rights of the Anuak, but I am standing up for the lives of every human being, even those who have killed the Anuak as well as Prime Minister Meles Zenawi himself. Let the rule of law bring justice to the victims of these crimes and to their perpetrators!

Right now, the democratically elected political opposition leaders are in prison. The defense troops are killing people in Gambella, Ogaden, Sidamo, Oromia and other places, but it seems that there is no real momentum working up that will impact these urgent situations. In fact, to be honest, Meles may be more advanced in thinking of how to defeat our weak efforts than we are in confronting the tragedy in our country. He is smart enough to come up with a 52-page

strategy of how to silence the Diaspora whereas we cannot come up with one voice and action

The short-term goal on the top of the list should be the release of the leaders and the Anuak and other Ethiopian political prisoners throughout the country. Up until now, these people have been leading the movement. What they have sacrificed should not be taken away. A second short-term goal should be to stop the killing going on in throughout the country, but especially in the rural areas like in Gambella, Oromia and Ogaden. A third short-term goal is to mobilize Ethiopians and non-Ethiopians everywhere to action.

I hope when you go home today, you go as changed people, willing to pray, to call a meeting, to contribute money, to organize an effort or that you are more willing to join someone else's efforts if those efforts are going in the right direction. Remember that nothing gets done if all we do is talk. We must follow it up with action. Hold to the highest standards.



Freedom Under Attack

Continued from page 4

HR5680 Ethiopia Freedom, Democracy ■■■

economic freedom in Ethiopia (B) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term “nonessential United States assistance” means assistance under any provision of law, other than humanitarian assistance, assistance under emergency food programs, assistance to combat HIV/AIDS, and other health care assistance

SEC. 6. ENSURING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA.

(a) LIMITATION ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE; TRAVEL

RESTRICTIONS.—(1) LIMITATION ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE.—(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), security assistance shall not be provided to Ethiopia until such time as the certification described in paragraph (3) is made in accordance with such paragraph. (B) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply with respect to peacekeeping or counter-terrorism assistance. Peacekeeping or counter-terrorism assistance provided to Ethiopia shall not be used for any other security-related purpose or to provide training to security personnel or units accused of human rights violations against civilians. (2) TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.—Beginning on the date that is 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and until such time as the certification described in paragraph (3) is made in accordance with such paragraph, the President shall deny a visa and entry into the United States to—(A) any official of the Government of Ethiopia who—(i) has been involved in giving orders to use lethal force against peaceful demonstrators in Ethiopia; or (ii) has been accused of gross human rights violations; (B) security personnel of the Government of Ethiopia who were involved in the June or November 2005 shootings of demonstrators; and (C) Ethiopian civilians who were involved

in the November 2005 killings of seven policemen in Ethiopia. (3) CERTIFICATION.—The certification described in this paragraph is a certification by the President to Congress that the Government of Ethiopia is making credible, quantifiable efforts to ensure that—(A) all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in

Ethiopia have been released, their civil and political rights restored, and their property returned; (B) prisoners held without charge or kept in detention without fair trial in violation of the Constitution of Ethiopia are released or receive a fair and speedy trial, and prisoners whose charges have been dismissed or acquitted and are still being held are released without delay; (C) the Ethiopian judiciary is able to function independently and allowed to uphold the Ethiopian Constitution and international human rights standards; (D) the investigation of the killing of civilian protesters by Ethiopian security forces is credible, transparent, and those involved in the unlawful killing are punished; (E) family members, legal counsel, and others have unfettered access to visit detainees in Ethiopian prisons; (F) print and broadcast media in Ethiopia are able to operate free from undue interference and laws restricting media freedom, including sections of the Ethiopian Federal Criminal Code, are revised;

(G) licensing of independent radio and television in Ethiopia is open and transparent; (H) access in Ethiopia is provided to the Internet and the ability of citizens to freely send and receive electronic mail and otherwise obtain information is guaranteed; (I) the National Election Board (NEB) includes representatives of political parties with seats in the Ethiopian Parliament and guarantees independence for the NEB in its decision making; (J) representatives of international human rights organizations engaged in human rights monitoring work in Ethiopia are admitted to Ethiopia without undue restriction; and (K) Ethiopian human rights organizations are able to operate in an environment free of WAIVER.— (A) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive the application of paragraph (1) or (2) on a case-by-case basis if the President determines

that— (i) to the maximum extent practicable, the Government of Ethiopia has met the requirement of paragraph (3)(A); and (ii) such a waiver is in the national interests of the United States.

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Civic Society Members Are Not Spared

Daniel Bekele (top) is the policy, research and advocacy manager of the Ethiopian office of Action Aid, the international development agency. He is a human rights lawyer. Netsanet Demissie (bottom) a human rights and environmental rights lawyer, is the founder and director of the Organization for Social Justice in Ethiopia (OSJE) a local human rights NGO The OSJE had held the secretariat of a 35-member coalition of NGOs to observe the May 2005 elections. Both men, as antipoverty activists, had been closely involved in activities in Ethiopia in support of the Global Call for Action



against Poverty (GCAP). They were not members of any political party and it appears that they may have been arrested solely on account of their criticisms of the government in the course of their legitimate civil society activities. Both are still in prison since November of 2005



Kassahun Kebede, a teacher and chairman of the Addis Ababa branch of the Ethiopian Teachers Association (ETA), is also accused of “outrage against Constitution”.

The ETA, which is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and Education International, is the oldest trade union in Ethiopia, with half a million teacher members



from primary, secondary and higher educational institutions jailed since November 2005

The Free Press Under Attack

IFJ Urges International Community to Demand Release of 20 Journalists Imprisoned in Ethiopia

04/08/2006 www.ifg.org

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) today demanded the release of 20 journalists who have been jailed during the last nine months in Ethiopia for political reasons and called on other world leaders to pressure the Ethiopian government for their release as well as the international community.

Seventeen journalists were arrested during the violent suppression of anti-government riots that followed the November 2005 elections in Ethiopia. The journalists are charged with treason and could face possible death sentences or life imprisonment. The journalists have refused to be defended in court because of the political nature of their arrests and detentions.

"We strongly protest against the blind repression of freedom of expression and demand the immediate and unconditional release of all the journalists held in Ethiopia, since there is no solid evidence against the charges," said Gabriel Baglo, Director of the Africa Office of the IFJ. "The government of Meles Zenawi holds the sad record of the country with the highest number of imprisoned journalists, as well as the country with the largest number of journalists in exile in Africa."

Among the detained journalists is, Serkalem Fasil, who was pregnant when she was arrested and subsequently gave birth in prison. She has yet to receive proper medical attention for herself and for her baby. Fasil's husband, journalist Eskinder Nega has also languished in prison since November 2005 with other hundreds of political detainees.

Also among the detainees is Abraham Reta, a freelance journalist who was arrested on 24 April 2006 and condemned the same day to one year imprisonment. Two journalists from the public television channel ETV, Shiferraw Insermu and Dhabassa Wakjira, have been in jail since 22 April 2004.

A number of the journalists and political prisoners are suffering from health problems due to the poor prison conditions. According to reports, a significant number of the prisoners were absent from a June 21 court hearing. Prison police stated that the journalists were sick and some of them were hospitalized at the time of the hearing.

Prison sources said that Kaliti prison, where the prisoners are held, is at its worst during the Ethiopian rainy season when wild mice

invade the cells to avoid the harsh weather and bring with them contagious diseases. Most of the cells are made of corrugated iron sheets, which are extremely cold when it rains and extremely hot during the dry seasons.

On a mission to Ethiopia in May, the IFJ and the global education workers' union federation Education International complained about the lack of freedom of association and freedom of expression in Ethiopia and the harassment and attacks on journalists, teachers and their associations.

"The Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association (EFJA) is completely disbanded; there is no independent media in Ethiopia, as most independent journalists have gone underground and about 100 journalists are in exile, including EFJA President Kifle Mulat," said

the IFJ's Baglo, who was part of the mission

"We strongly call on the African Union Chairperson, President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of the Republic of Congo, and the Chairman of the African Union Commission, Alpha Omar Konare, to pressure the Ethiopian government to release all detained journalists unconditionally," he added. "We also called on US President George Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and European Union President José Manuel Barroso who support the Ethiopian government, to make sure that press freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of association and human rights are respected in Ethiopia."

For further information contact the IFJ: +221 842 01 43

Some of the Evidence Against Journalist According to Prosecutor...

CPJ.org

As evidence against the journalists, the government has cited more than 20 editorials and more than a dozen press interviews with CUD leaders. At CPJ's request, Chief Prosecutor Shemelis Kemal provided a sampling of 12 of the pieces in the original Amharic. CPJ analyzed English translations of the pieces. While the editorials are antigovernment, some harshly so, none calls for violence and none makes reference to ethnic aggression. CPJ found no evidence to support the prosecution's contention that the pieces were intended to provoke acts of violence or genocide."

Here are English translations of excerpts from two editorials cited by the Ethiopian government as evidence against journalists being tried for treason:

Ethiop, August 17, 2005: "The constitution clearly states that a human being cannot lose his or her life except in one way. Article 15 reads: 'Every person has the right to life. No one shall lose his life except under penalty for a capital offense.' Was a legal provision ever invoked before those 40 innocent young kids were massacred in public? If the rulers violate their own constitution, and if the opposition then vio-

lates the constitution in order to save the country from a crime, who should be the one responsible for a crime? ...

"There cannot be free elections until the electoral board, which is a stooge of the EPRDF (ruling party), is dismantled. Justice cannot be found in the courts that are governed by EPRDF cadres and are filled with those who have enriched themselves with embezzlement. Getting rid of these elements through a national coalition government would indeed bring about lasting peace and stability."

Addis Zena, Sept. 19, 2005: "The people of Ethiopia have clearly been robbed of their voices. A party or a government that conspired to rob the voice of its own people should never be given legitimacy. Even if it wants to stay in power, the people would only chant 'Thief! Thief!' and would not let it happen. And because the electoral board has been the main organizer and accomplice of such robbery, it should be denounced and should lose its credibility. ...

"Opposition parties must provide wise leadership in recovering the voice of the people from the party that has stolen it in order to stay in power."

Ana Gomez: Message to the Ethiopian people on May election Anniversary

EthioMedia

May 15, 2006

Ana Gomez European chief Election Observer

On the occasion of the anniversary of the May 15 election, I want to send you a message of solidarity, sympathy and hope. A message to all those Ethiopian men and women, young and old, prominent leaders and anonymous citizens who have fallen and continued to fall victims to extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrests, harassment and intimidation in the aftermath of the May elections in the hands of the current Ethiopian government."

As you all know, I went to your country as chief of the European Union Election Observation Mission. I was fascinated by the law-abiding nature of the people of Ethiopia. And I admire their democratic fervor. Like most Ethiopians in Diaspora, I'm now not



Enthusiastic Ethiopians Registering to vote for the May 2005 election

allowed to set foot in Ethiopia for saying the truth and fulfilling my duty as Chief Observer.

We've recognized and openly declared that the EPRDF government deserved credit for organizing an open national debate during the months leading up to the May elections. Despite some shortcomings, the overall process leading to the election day was commendable. But elections cannot be reduced to debates and campaigns. They are futile if the people's votes are not properly

counted, verified, and certified, and the will of the people duly determined. This is the essence of democracy.



Voters looking at the election result

In the May elections one year ago, the voice of the Ethiopian people was loud and clear: they wanted change. But the current rulers of the country did not care to listen and it is why the democratic will of the people of Ethiopia remains unfulfilled. The Ethiopian people have been, therefore, betrayed by those who continue to govern in their name without their proper mandate. My hope is that it will not be betrayed by Ethiopia's democratic forces who should live up to the huge challenges of addressing centuries' of injustice and poor governance.

This can only be achieved by standing together on democratic and pluralistic



CUD Supporters Celebrating Victory

principles, acting in unison, avoiding divisions and fragmentation, and by focusing on the main pressing task of restoring the

chequered hope of the people.

The struggle for the respect of the people's voice must and will continue, I'm sure. I say this [because] I know I'm addressing myself to a great and courageous people who have gone through so many ups and downs in their long march to freedom. It will be up to you - those in Ethiopia and outside - to see to it that this latest setback will be the last on the path to democracy, and social justice.

Dear Friends,

In your just struggle for democracy, justice and freedom, it is important that you resist peacefully and legally the violence and the lawlessness of the current rulers. Also you need to avoid ethnic hatred, mistrust and fear amongst you. You know this is exactly what the current rulers will want and will foster among you to divide you, and to



Protest against the stolen election

weaken your opposition to their rule.

I know from the history of your country, which I studied, and from what I've seen and heard there from every body that Ethiopians are self-reliant and morally very strong, and that they will always rise to the occasion to defend what's their own, even when powers who claim to defend and promote human rights and democracy turn a blind eye and are reluctant to lend a helping hand.

At present, your struggle is gaining international support. We in the European Parliament, for example, have voted a series of resolutions and forwarded recommendations to solve the current political crisis in Ethiopia to European governments and

Ana Gomez: Message ...

Continued from page 8

elsewhere. But much more needs to be done to unmask the true face of the current rulers of Ethiopia.

On my part, I promise to do all what I can, together with democrats and peace-loving



Mothers grieving the over 80 death of their children by the security force

peoples all over the world to see to it that the Ethiopian people will not be once again let down by the international community. In the coming weeks and months, we in the European Parliament will continue to struggle for the implementation of these resolutions and recommendations.



The winners of the election – CUD leaders Dr Berhanu Nega Mayor elect Secretary Eyol along other leaders being transported to Jail with Victory sign

We believe all political leaders, members of independent press, human rights groups and civic society organizations along with thousands of students and other innocent citizens of Ethiopia who are arbitrarily held

by the government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi must be released without delay and without pre-conditions.

We believe that the Ethiopian government must be accountable for human rights. To that end, we repeat our Parliament's call for the setting up of an international independent commission of inquiry to investigate the massive human rights violations that occurred during the past year, and to bring to justice all those responsible for those atrocities.

We also believe that the target of sanctions should be imposed against the leaders of the regime who persist in abusing human rights.

Above all, we believe there is an urgent need to find peaceful, legal and negotiated solutions to the current crisis. Allowing the crisis to fester will lead to further turmoil and unrest in the country, with adverse consequences for the entire region in Africa as well.

As I see it, the only reasonable alternative is to put the derailed democratization process back on track. All stake holders in the country should come forward with concrete proposals to revive the democratization process, and to promote peace and national reconciliation.

South Africa built democracy by opting for reconciliation, and an all-inclusive political solution was found. I believe EPRDF should be part of the solution, and should play a role in building democracy in your country as did the former ruling party in South Africa.

Proposals that focus on peace, democratization and national reconciliation offered by the two major political groups - UEDF and CUD - in this regard should be encouraged. Also the Oromo organizations, including OLF, should be involved in this joint effort.

Dear Friends,

I hope you stay united and do your share; we will be on your side; In the coming weeks and months I assure you that I will do whatever is possible so that the struggle for justice by the courageous people of Ethiopia will stay on the agenda of the international community.

We in the European Parliament also commit to coordinate our activities with parliamentarians and other democrats throughout Europe, Africa, America and elsewhere.

I must tell of my own experience. I lived for 20 years under dictatorship in my own country: Portugal. At times, everything seemed



Some of the Jailed-CUD Leaders in court, Jailed Since November of 2005 (from top: Prof Mesfin, Judge Bertukan- CUD vice chairwomen, Dr Berhanu Mayor elect, Mr Shawel CUD chairman

blocked, depressing, desperate. There seemed to be no way out. There were few voices of support outside the country. But the Portuguese people resisted in all manners, and in many imaginative ways.

All democratic forces managed to unite against the oppressors despite our political and ideological disagreements. And suddenly the opportunity to grab freedom was there; and we grabbed it with both hands. And I can assure you that no one can take away the democratic rule, the rule of our people, any more. This is to tell you that the commitment of the international community to democracy in Ethiopia is important. Yes. But ultimately not decisive. Reaching democratic governance in Ethiopia will primarily be the responsibility of the Ethiopians. If you keep this in mind, if you stick to a strategy of unity in the struggle, I'm sure that we will meet in Addis Ababa to celebrate democracy in Ethiopia in the near future.

Long live Ethiopia.

The text was transcribed by Ethiomedia.com (May 14, 2006)

NEWS ALERT URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

ANOTHER POLOITICAL LEADERS ARE IN THE VERGE OF LOSSING THEIR LIVES IN PRISON

Amnesty Int'l Appeals Again on Dr. Berhanu Nega's Behalf

Amnesty International Release
August 6, 2006

Amnesty International welcomed the ruling on 19 July by a High Court judge that Dr Berhanu Negga be transferred to a less crowded, cleaner and better ventilated cell in Addis Ababa's Kaliti prison, in compliance with the recommendations issued by doctors at the hospital where he was treated in June. However, reports suggest that the judge's orders were not carried out and that Dr Berhanu Negga remains in his original cell. Concern remains that Dr Berhanu Negga's health



will further deteriorate if he is not moved to a better cell and allowed to receive adequate medical treatment.

Dr Berhanu Negga suffers from high blood pressure as well as cardiomyopathy, a heart disease which causes the heart muscles to become weaker, making it unable to pump as well as it should. He was hospitalized on 9 June after experiencing severe shortness of breath. However, he was sent back to prison after 20 days, against the advice of doctors and without having been examined by a specialist as had been recommended. Doctors' recommendations that he should be transferred to a less crowded and cleaner cell with better ventilation were also reportedly disre-

garded by prison authorities. in Kaliti prison, Dr Berhanu Negga is held in a large zinc-walled cell, which holds 270 political and criminal prisoners, including other opposition party leaders. It is currently rainy season in Ethiopia and the cell's roof leaks, making the cell cold and damp. Sanitary facilities are poor. There are rats, cockroaches and fleas in the cell. Some of the other prisoners on trial alongside Dr. Berhanu Negga are held in slightly better and less crowded cells in the prison. Prisoners are generally provided with medical treatment as needed, either in prison or in hospital, but there have sometimes been delays and other deficiencies.

PROF. M. WOLDEMARIAM & CHAIRMAN -HAILU SHAWEL HOSPITALIZED

August 19, 2006

Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam, 76 was rushed to a hospital yesterday. "Although it is not clear what exactly the health problem is yet, we do know that he is in the Intensive Care Unit," a message from the family stated.

"We would like to assure all that at the present time, he is doing well under observation," the family said.

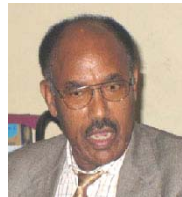
"We remain concerned about the adverse health consequences of the living conditions in Kaliti



prison, particularly among the elder prisoners, those with prior health conditions etc, and the quality and availability of appropriate care to these prisoners, even by local standards," the Professor's family added.

August 09, 2006

Kinjitt International Leadership Office has learned that Ato Hailu Shawel, Chairman of Kinijit for Unity and Democracy Party which is the major opposition in Ethiopia, has been admitted to hospital today around 9:00 in the morning. He has been taken to the Hospital



from his kaliti prison cell. His sugar level fluctuates from dropping to 40 and going up to 250-260.

He is now at the police hospital and is being monitored. Severe restriction of movement and exercise at the prison might have caused this problem. Members of the family are at the hospital trying to visit him.

In related development, Ato Hailu has always been denied access to meet the international community visitors who come to prison for either fact finding mission or to analyze the situation of the prisoners. Three incidents can be cited here, the day Louis Michel visited the prisoners Ato Hailu was taken to hospital deliberately while he put his request long before that day. Fortunately, he insisted to go back to prison and was able to see him just before he left.

The Irish foreign Minister is another case where Hailu was taken to hospital. Yesterday, when Congressman Donald Payne went to visit the defendants again Hailu was taken to Hospital. Although Hailu was back from hospital around 11:00, the authorities told Payne that he is still in hospital.

THE PLIGHT OF JOURNALIST PRISONERS

Eskinder Nega, one of the twenty imprisoned and seventy six charged journalists since November 2005 has been taken recently from Kalit prison to a dark isolation rooms in "Alem Bekagn prison"; where the regime keeps



prisoners under death sentence. .Amnesty International fear Torture / Ill-treatment/ harsh prison conditions
Eskinder Nega's wife, Serkalem Fasil_is

also one of the original seventeen journalist detained in November 2005 in Kaliti prison. She was pregnant when arrested and gave birth in prison. She is in need medical attention. The international community must be aware of the deplorable condition prisoners are held and make the Ethiopian government accountable for the safety of the prisoners.



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