



Ethiopia: Human Rights League of the Horn

Of Africa/HRLHA Urgent Action and Appeal,

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A Fierce Crackdown against University Students in South-Western Ethiopia

In another episode of suppression, dictatorship, irresponsibility, and racism exercised by the TPLF/EPRDF government of Ethiopia, Oromo students at Mizab-Tepi University in south-western Ethiopia, and Haro Maya (Alemaya) University in Southeastern Oromia/Ethiopia, Hawasa University in Southern Ethiopia and Nekemt University in Western Oromia/Ethiopia have once again been met with guns and bullets, resulting in life-threatening injuries and imprisonment of dozens and scores of students.

The Oromo students of Mizan-Tepi University were encountered by fully armed federal police force while holding a mini-demonstration on the university compound following a racially and politically triggered attack by Tigrian students attending the same university of Mizan-Tepi. According to HRLHA reporter in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa/Finfinne, the Oromo students of Mizan-Tepi University who staged the mini-demonstration on the university campus did not have any other intentions than attempting to bring the intimidating and harassing academic situations created by Tigrean students.

In addition to one unconfirmed case of death, about 114 students were (both male and female) were arrested and detained, although some of them were said to have been injured.

Highly concerning is that the whereabouts of those who remained in detention were not known until the time this urgent action was compiled. Meanwhile, HRLHA has confirmed that four Oromo students of Haro Maya University, Hawaasaa University and Wallaggaa University namely

	Name	University	Date Arrested	Sex
1	Girma Turuna	Haro Maya	April 9, 2011	M
2	Dachasa Wirtu Mosisa	Haro Maya	April 9, 2011	M
3	Gaddisa Ragassa	Hawaasaa		M
4	Fayisa Fufa	Wallaggaa	April 5, 2011	M



Girma Turuna



Dachasa Wirtu Mosisa

have been transported to Addis Ababa/Finfinne after being kidnapped by members of the Federal Police at different times; but, their specific whereabouts too were not know. HRLHA has also learnt through its correspondents that students of Mizan-Tepi University have been stripped off their student IDs, and almost all students other than those who were Tigreans have (maybe temporarily) fled the university campus due to the prevailing situations of insecurity. However, local, regional, and/or federal authorities have prevented students from travelling in any direction or to any destination (including their families/parents homes and places of origin) by conspiring with local transport agencies and/or offices.



Gaddisaa Raggasaa

According to HRLHA's correspondents, many of the seriously wounded students of Mizan-Tepi University have been transported to Jimma Hospital in Oromia Region, following inability to get treatments at local health institutions.

It is very unfortunate that such racial, discriminatory, and dictatorial actions and experiences have been repeating themselves in the past years under the Ethiopian TPLF/EPRDF regime. It is more unfortunate that they have been happening in academic environments where equal and fair treatments of students by any party or group involved in the delivery and reception of education are expected in a friendly, conducive, motivational, and absolutely non-political atmosphere. It is undoubtedly very difficult to expect the emergence of adequately trained, motivated, and productive citizens with quality and transferable academic achievements from such discriminatory and intimidating environments.

HRLHA is highly concerned about the survival of the seriously injured students, and the whereabouts as well as safety of the students who are still in detention. HRLHA calls up on the Ethiopian Government to immediately release the detained students and facilitate the resumption of normal classes. A thorough investigation of the overall situation is also expected from a responsible government so that the culprits would be held accountable for their wrongdoings. HRLHA also calls up on regional and international diplomatic, democratic, and human rights agencies to challenge the Ethiopian TPLF/EPRDF regime on its persistent brutal, dictatorial, and suppressive actions against innocent and unarmed civilians who attempt to exercise their “said-to-have-been-granted” democratic rights.

HRLHA calls upon governments of the West, all local, regional and international human rights agencies to join hands and demand the immediate halt of this mass arrest and imprisonment of innocent Oromo University students by the Ethiopian government and release those who are in prison without any preconditions.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to the Ethiopian Government and its concerned officials as swiftly as possible, in English, Ahmaric, or your own language expressing:

- concern at the apprehension and fear of Torture of the citizens who are being held in Ma’ikelawi Central Investigation Office and other detention centers since in February, 2011 at different times and calling for their immediate and unconditional release;
 - urging the authorities of Ethiopia to ensure that these detainees are treated in accordance with regional and international standards on the treatment of prisoners, and And
 - to diplomatic representatives of Ethiopia accredited to your country.
- His Excellency: Mr. Meles Zenawi – Prime Minister of Ethiopia

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• His Excellency Birhan Hailu –Min. of Justice

PO Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Fax: +251 11 5517775; +251 11 5520874 Email: ministry-justice@telecom.net.et

CC

- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

United Nations Office at Geneva 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland **Fax:** + 41 22 917 9022 (particularly for urgent matters) E-mail: **tb-petitions@ohchr.org** This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it

- UNHCR main office Geneva, Switzerland.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Case Postale 2500 CH-1211 Genève 2 Dépôt Suisse.
telephone number: +41 22 739 8111

- **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)**

48 Kairaba Avenue, P.O.Box 673, Banjul, The Gambia.

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