Saudi Arabia: Extreme Brutality against migrants From Ethiopia
HRLHA Appeal and Urgent Action

November 13, 2013

For Immediate Release

Honorable ABDULLAH bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia;

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
Riyadh, Royal Court: 1-488-2222, Jeddah: 2-665-4233
Taif: 2-736-5200, Makkah: 2-823-4111, Madinah: 4-857-2500

His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz,

Upon the expiration of the three months extended deadline for migrant workers to renew their residency and employment status (November 4, 2013), thousands of migrant workers in Saudi Arabia most of whom believed to be from Ethiopia were apprehended in various regions of the Kingdom by Ministry of Labor inspection squads formed for this purpose under the pretext of flushing out workers who violate rules regarding work and residency permits.

The most victimized of the raids to flush out illegal workers were the free visa holder migrant workers of Ethiopian Origins. ‘Free visa’ holders are considered among the most exploited, lowest paid and abused workforce in Saudi Arabia. The sponsor, who keeps the worker’s passport and other travel documents with him/her, plays a crucial role in the worker’s life. All dealings with the government such as renewal of ‘iqama’ or residency permit are through the sponsor. Sources from the capital city, Riyadh, reported that among the total of 28000 surrounded migrants, authorities detained around 16,500 migrant workers in the first four days (November 5 – 9, 2013) in a nationwide crackdown across seven provinces.
The Saudi officials confirmed that among the seven provinces nearly half of the migrants were arrested.
near the southern border with Yemen and in Mecca where some Muslims stay on illegally after their pilgrimage.

Though the police officials in the capital city claim that the security forces killed the African migrant worker in el-Manhoufa because he and others tried to resist arrest, the information from the migrants and from the publicly released video confirmed that the three Ethiopians killed were murdered by the brutal action of police. Among the victims was Umere Abdurahim Ali, 24 an Oromo national from Ethiopia who was gunned down on November 5.

![Umare Abdurahman Ali](image)

After the crackdown resumed, more than 10 Ethiopians were killed and thrown into the bush and eaten by hyenas.

**Your Majesty**, the government of Saudi Arabia has an international obligation to treat a person who finds him/herself inside the borders of Saudi Arabia according to International law. The Universal declaration of Human Rights and International conventions on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families Article 9 & 10, states “*The right to life of migrant workers and members of their families shall be protected by law*”, “*no migrant worker or member of his or her family shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*” respectively. In
case these migrant workers are illegal, they should be treated as human beings with human dignity and deported in a civilized manner to the destination of their choice.

The Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa calls upon all world community, UN member states, International Civic and humanitarian Organizations and diplomatic communities and agencies to exert pressure on the Saudi Arabian government so that it discloses the whereabouts and the current situations of the confined migrant workers, and compensates the victims for their loss and renews their status. The HRLHA also calls on the Saudi Arabian government to sign all international covenants and treaties that it hasn’t yet signed.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to

The Honorable ABDULLAH bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. King of Saudi Arabia and other concerned Saudi Arabian government officials and to diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia who are accredited to your country as swiftly as possible, in English, Arabic, or your own language expressing:

- Your concern regarding the apprehension and possible torture of the citizens who are being held in different detention centers; and calling for their immediate and unconditional release;
- urging the Saudi Government authorities to ensure that these detainees are treated in accordance with the regional and international standards on the treatment of prisoners,
- Adhere to international conventions on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families
- to bring to justice those Police and Security agents who committed crimes against innocent civilians by using excessive force

To:

HRH Crown Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud:

Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of Defense
Airport Road, Riyadh 11165
TEL: 1-478-5900/1-477-7313 FAX: 1-401-1336
HRLHA is a non-political organization (with the UN Economic and Social Council – (ECOSOC) Consultative Status) which attempts to challenge abuses of human rights of the people of various nations and nationalities in the Horn of Africa.

Tel: (647) 280 7062, E-Mail: hrldirector@mail.org, Web site: www.humanrightsleague.com

Jeddah Office TEL: 2-665-2400
Web site: http://www.moda.gov.sa

❖ SAUD al-Faysal bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street, Riyadh 11124
TEL: 1-406-7777/1-441-6836 FAX: 1-403-0159
Jeddah Office TEL: 2-669-0900
web site http://www.mofa.gov.sa

❖ AHMAD bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud:

Ministry of Interior
PO Box 2933, Riyadh 11134
TEL : 1-401-1944 FAX : 1-403-1185
Jeddah Office TEL: 2-687-232
web site: http://www.moi.gov.sa

❖ Muhammad bin Abd al-Karim bin Abd al-Aziz al-ISA:

Ministry of Justice
University Street, Riyadh 11137
TEL : 1-405-7777/1-405-5399
Jeddah Office TEL: 2-665-0857
web site: http://www.moj.gov.sa

Copied To

❖ League of Arab States Headquarters

His Excellency Dr. Nabil El Araby, Secretary General
Egypt Cairo – Secretariat – Tahrir Square
Telephone: 5752966 - 5750511
Fax: 5740331 - 5761017
PO. Box: 11642

• 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

• African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR)

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

Tel: (220) 4392 962 , 4372070, 4377721 – 23 Fax: (220) 4390 764

E-mail: achpr@achpr.org

• U.S. Department of State

Laura Hruby
Ethiopia Desk Officer
Tel: (202) 647-6473, HrubyLP@state.gov

• Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada

125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0G2
Tel: 1-800-267-8376 (toll-free in Canada), 613-944-4000

• Amnesty International – London

Clairy Beston (Clairy or Claire?)
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• Human Rights Watch

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