



Ethiopia: Arrests and Detentions of Oromo Students in Southern Oromia

HRLHA Urgent Action

March 25, 2014

Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa (HRLHA) would like to express its deep concern over the safety and fates of Shakiso High School Oromo Students who became victims of discriminate mass arrest and detention in Shakiso Town of Guji Zone in southern Oromia. Around two hundred ethnic



Shakiso High School

Oromo Students have been sent to a jail in the nearby Adola Town, and some have received varying degrees of injuries both from bullets that were shot by the security forces during the interference and by beatings.

Those high school Oromo Students, almost all of whom are juvenile, were arrested and/or picked up at different times from different places including the school compound following a minor clash between them and ethnic Amhara Students of the same high school. According to

information obtained by HRLHA through its correspondents, the clash between the two groups occurred following a provocation by the ethnic Amhara Students in opposition to the singing of the regional anthem in the regional Oromo Language by ethnic Oromo Students during flag raising ceremony at the school based on the rules and regulations provided for by the constitution of the regional state. The ethnic Oromo Students were reporting the incident and filing their complaints with the school administration when the school compound was raided by the federal security forces. Among the ironies surrounding this incident were that: 1). The Federal Security Forces were deployed to interfere in such very minor and localized issues that could easily be dealt with by local administrative bodies and communities including that of the school itself,

2). The ethnic Oromo Students, who were the victims of the clash, were discriminately double-victimized while those who triggered the violence were left unquestioned, 3) Not only that such constitutional

provisions as a regional anthem that have been in place for close to two decades becomes a subject of dispute, but also those who attempted to exercise such legal provisions were deemed criminals that belong to detention instead of those who contradicted the constitution head on.

The Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa (HRLHA) has been able to obtain the names of the following Oromo students among those who have been detained:

1. .Bezabish Gurmeessaa (MEMBER OF OPPOSITION OFC)- wounded by bullet,
2. Desta Waaree – beaten up and injured,
3. Bali Chachu (MEMBER OF OPPOSITION OFC)
2. Buno Shaggola (MEMBER OF OPPOSITION OFC)
3. Bakalcha Oddo (MEMBER OF OPPOSITION OFC)
4. Bezabish Gurmeessaa
5. Chaltu Birbissa
6. Hotessa Soree
7. Yohanes Jisso
8. Kifle Areri
9. Badhadha (father name not identified)
10. Beyena Jarso
11. Shambel Galchu
12. Jemal Aga
13. Wendimu Areri
14. Nagessa Gedo
15. Getachew Demise
16. Boru Dube
17. Gemechis Bilu
18. Chari Chana
19. Ware Kottola ,

Although the interference of the government security forces was not far from expectations, the very harsh and violent actions that have resulted in life-threatening injuries are not acceptable by any standard. Given the violent way the students were dealt with, it is also very likely that they could be subjected to tortures.

Therefore, HRLHA calls up on the Ethiopian government to unconditionally release the detained students; and allow necessary treatments for those who have been injured and/or wounded. It also calls upon the Ethiopian government to investigate the clash and bring the culprits to justice so that they refrain from continued racist provocations that will create conflicts between the two nations.