

Oromia Support Group Australia Appeal for Urgent Action:

To: Committee on Enforced Disappearances and Committee against Torture
Human Rights Treaties Division (HRTD)
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
Palais Wilson - 52, rue des Pâquis
CH-1201 Geneva (Switzerland)

Ethiopia: Kidnapped and disappearance of Oromo civilians



(Magarsa Mashsha)



(Urgessa Damana)

Oromia Support Group Australia Inc. (OSGA) expresses its deep concern regarding the kidnapping and disappearance of two Oromo civilians by the Ethiopian security forces. Mr Magarsa Mashasha Ayansa was kidnapped and diapered on April 23rd, 7pm local time while Urgessa Damana was on May 4th, 2015. Mr Magarsa, community health worker, a student of Ambo University is the local area resident. He was kidnapped by Ethiopian security forces from the country's central city Fifinna (Addis Ababa) - Bole area – while he was on a trip for his personal business. In a similar situation, Mr Urgessa Damana a former Rift Valley University Student and resident of Ambo town also captured on 4th of May 2015 by

Ethiopian security forces. Since then the whereabouts of these Oromo civilians remained unknown.

OSGA believes that the Ethiopian government conduct violated the fundamental rights. The right to freedom from torture and the UN Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention and Imprisonment including the UN Standard Minimum Treatment of Prisoners is entirely denied. We are concerned that this pattern will continue to worsen.

We respectfully believe that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) - Human Rights Treaties Division (HRTD) has a duty to use its diplomatic relationships with the reciprocal expectation of protecting human rights and legitimate democratic governance. These accusations reveal serious violations of human rights and legal process, and without external accountability, many vulnerable people will suffer in the country.

We, therefore, urge you to:

1. Request the Ethiopian Government to reveal the whereabouts of these two Oromo civilians and immediate and unconditional release of them including all political prisoners under their captivity.
2. Request to investigate, amongst other things, actions taken by the Ethiopian Government security forces in the state of Oromia and the suffering of Oromo civilians in hundreds of official and hidden torture chambers.
3. Raise this case with the international community and other relevant United Nation bodies. Stress the right to remedy, restitution, compensation, non-repetition, and punishment of the perpetrators, in line with the UN Guidelines on the right to treat.

We denounce the attacks on peoples who are exercising their fundamental and democratic rights.

Thanks for considering of OSGA appeal

Oromia Support Group Australia

Background:

Over the past two decades, the Ethiopian security, army and police force have abducted, killed, detained and tortured hundreds of thousands of Oromo civilians. In recent years, this abuse of government power has been worsening, through displacing thousands of Oromo farmers from their land. It is the dreadful continuation of recent horrendous human rights violations against Oromo civilians, by the Ethiopian government.

To the very extent since the earlier year (2014), hundreds of Oromo students peacefully demonstrated to express their concern about this displacement of Oromo farmers from their ancestry land. The Ethiopian government responded with a severe 'crackdown' on the students' demonstration with killings and driving thousands of them to various prison centres in the country. The Ethiopian government's actions were particularly disturbing. The demonstration was calling for it to cease the evacuation of Oromo peasants from their land, and asking to release Oromo civilian political prisoners and the opening of democratic space in Ethiopia. This situation is made worse by the severe restrictions on access to Ethiopia, which affects foreign media and neutral international organisations to query this brutality.

Summary:

The detention and torture of innocent civilians are part of a worsening pattern of arbitrary arrest. Use of excessive force by armed security and police, and torture in custody, aimed at preventing free speech and free assembly among Oromo people and human rights defenders. We believe the pattern of arbitrary arrest and the use of excessive force and torture in detention by police in Ethiopia will continue unless action is taken. We are also concerned for the safety of the victims, and furthermore, the right to remedy of the victims will not be fulfilled by the Ethiopian government.