
PRESS RELEASE - April 1996

The Oromia Support Group aims to publicise human rights violations committed against the people of Ethiopia by forces employed by the Ethiopian Government. Its objectives are to promote democracy, freedom from human rights abuses and self-determination for all the peoples of Ethiopia, and disseminate information about Oromo history and culture.

Since its inception, and prior to this press release, the Oromia Support Group has reported 973 extra-judicial killings, 385 disappearances and 6380+ imprisonments of civilians suspected of supporting groups opposing the government. Most of these have been Oromo people. Torture and rape of prisoners is commonplace, especially in secret detention centres, whose existence is denied by the government. The EPRDF government's security forces are making it increasingly difficult for information on human rights violations to be gathered within the country and for this information to be sent abroad.

Sources of Information

1. Clandestine Human Rights Organisation A, Addis Ababa, Bulletin 23, February 1996.
2. Correspondent in Wallega, W.Oromia, 20.3.96
3. Correspondent A in USA, February 1996
4. Correspondent B in USA, February 1996
5. Correspondent in Canada, 27.2.96
6. Informant from Addis Ababa, 11.4.96
7. Dima Noggo, interviewed 9.4.96
8. Amnesty International Urgent Action Appeal, 21.3.96
9. Addis Tribune 22.3.96
10. Urji newspaper, Addis Ababa 22.3.96

ADDIS ABABA AND CENTRAL OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

Killings

Abicho Haji Mohammed, Manya Worki village, Arba Gugu, Arsi region was recently killed (reported Feb.1996). He was a prominent elder who was in detention in Hurso camp in 1992. (1).

Gobana Safatu, killed in Bacho Waddessa village in Woliso district, W. Showa, and *Tamane Olika*, killed in Djaldu district, W. Showa, (reported Feb.1996) (1).

Mrs Zahra Sheikh Bakry, 38, mother of four, residing in Saudi Arabia, went to Ethiopia to secure the release of her father, *Sheikh Bakry Gaja*, 75, arrested on suspicion of supporting the

OLF. Mrs Bakry paid a lot of money bribing different officials but was herself arrested and "severely beaten". She was released but died of her wounds a few days later. (5).

Challa Kebebe was among dozens arrested at Gindeberet, W.Showa on about 12.2.96 (see imprisonments below). It has been reported that he has died in detention as a result of torture. (8).

Disappearances

Jamal Hussein, whose imprisonment in Maikelawi Interrogation Centre, was reported previously, has disappeared from there. He was last heard of in 1994. (6).

In January, 1996, the following Oromos were kidnapped by EPRDF security forces in Addis Ababa and their whereabouts remain unknown :-

Fayera Nagara, employee of the Ethiopian Air Lines. He was also held for one month from Nov. 1995 without being charged.

Marga Gudata and his wife,

Kulani Atomsa and 2 other people, were taken from their home in Woreda 15, kebele 34.

Fikadu Dinsa, teacher

Boja Boru, teacher

Garbaba Tolassa

Mr Dhaba

Tekalegn Dago, Addis Ababa University, (14.1.96)

Shiferaw Toli, (14.1.96)

Kumsa Burayu, student at Addis Ababa University, (14.1.96).

Magarsa Wakjira has been named as one of the two people who disappeared with *Firomsa Taye, (Aga)*, an economist in the Oromia planning office, and *Fayera Abdissa*, an agricultural economist, on 14.1.96. (see February Press Release). (1).

Teshome Mutama was arrested at Gindeberet, W.Showa, on about 12.2.96 (see imprisonment etc, below). His whereabouts since arrest are not known and there are fears for his safety. (8).

Imprisonment etc

A recent report by the New-York based *Committee to Protect Journalists* shows that Ethiopia arrested 31 journalists last year. This is the second highest number of detained journalists in the world, after Turkey where there has been a crackdown on those reporting the war against the Kurds. (9)

More than 200 people were arrested in the South Central province of Arsi in January, 1996, in the villages of Itayya, Asasa, Shanaka, Seeru, Roobee and Bokoji. All were arrested without due process of law. Most of the detainees are prominent elders with large families. The following were identified :-

Khedir Ahmed

Hussien Qassim

Haji Ali

Nassir Ahmed

Ms. Fatuma

Mr. Bulo

Haji Hussien (1).

At the same time, the following were detained and released without charge :-

Hussein Sheikh Reshad

Gana Feyissa Tolcha

Tola Balcha Badhaso

Mansur Sheikh Abdala

Jamal Haji Tahir

"Most of these detainees lost most of their property, especially cattle, to the EPRDF army occupying their village. Some also lost their property during house searches." (1).

Wasane Mengistu, kidnapped on 14.1.96, went back to her home after 14 days and told her family that she was kept in the Special Branch for Investigation where she "saw and heard a lot of Oromo speaking prisoners". (1)

Bekele Ababa, from Ambo, W.Showa, was taken by EPRDF army in January 1996 and was "beaten all over his body and arrested. He is in a serious situation." (1)

Taye Tesema, Woreda 28, Kebele 02, House No. 551, Addis Ababa was taken by the EPRDF late one evening in December '95 or January '96. He was "blind folded and taken to an underground prison where he was kept for a week, beaten every night and asked to tell them those who are supporting the OLF by finance from Addis Ababa. He could not figure out the place of his detention after he was dropped somewhere on the road side to go home." (1).

Dalu Bekule was arrested in Addis Ababa, 16.2.96 (8).

Teshome Mutama, a male nurse at Gindeberet hospital, W.Showa, was arrested about 12.2.96, along with "dozens" of people in Gindeberet, following the escape of a suspected OLF detainee, former captain *Dugassa Iticha*, several of whose relatives were arrested and reportedly beaten. (8).

EASTERN OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

The gang rape of *Mrs Hajara Ibrahim* and the murder of her husband in Oboro, Harar, E.Hararge, was reported in the February 1996 Press Release. OSG has since learned that the events took place in October 1993 and were witnessed by relatives who now reside in the USA. Mrs Ibrahim now suffers from mental illness. (3).

Disappearances

The famous Oromo artist, *Ms. Shabbe Shekko* was arrested by the EPRDF on February 15, 1996 in the town of Goba, Bale, south-eastern Ethiopia. She was arrested upon arrival at Goba to celebrate with her family Id Al-Fatir, a holiday celebrated at the end of the fasting of Ramadan. A member of EPRDF militia, who was in the bus in which she was travelling, forced the bus to go to a police station where she was detained until they took her to an unknown place. To date, she is neither charged nor taken to court. (3, 8).

Imprisonment, Torture, etc

Mrs Dahabo Abdule, Laga Ambo, Hararge region, was taken by EPRDF soldiers from her home sometime in December '95 or January '96. She was pregnant. Her hands were tied together behind her back for 2 days and she was beaten because she appealed to the EPRDF commander about her sheep, cattle and goats being taken by the EPRDF army. She was detained for another two days and nights at Bate 04, and was labelled "OLF". (1)

Oromo singer, *Baharsitu Obsa*, who lives in Addis Ababa, was arrested in mid-February when visiting Dire Dawa, E.Hararge (8).

Abdella Ahmed Tesso, known as Abdella Magazaja, town council worker, was arrested in Dire Dawa on 19.2.96 (8).

WESTERN OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

Killings

The following were reported in February, 1996, (1) :-

Getachew Lamessa, killed in Horo Guduru, Eastern Wallega.

Bayana Obsi and 2 other people, killed in Horo Guduru, E.Wallega.

Eteffa Ofga, killed by EPRDF forces who surrounded his home in Babo Tobra village Mana Sibiu district, Western Wallega.

Adam Mul'ata was also killed in Babo Tobra village.

Disappearances

Birhanu Melka Guma, was held in Mendi EPRDF camp, Wallega, from 20-25th Jan., 1996. He disappeared from then on. (1).

Disappearances occurring on Jan. 7th. 1996 at Ende Town, Limu District, Horo Guduru, E.Wallega (1):-

Mekabil Tefera, teacher

Merga Sima, teacher

Dhuguma Galata, teacher

Dbuguma Foraso, teacher

Adeba Mengesha, teacher

Bebele Abata, teacher

Nemo Abdissa, teacher

Getachew Worku, teacher

Ms Yade

Ms Hegi Gerbi

Beyene Tesso, Ministry of Agriculture

Zalalem Amamu, Ministry of Agriculture

Mamush Hailu, Ministry of Agriculture

Ali Fet, living in a village between Gidami and Dembi Dollo, S.Wallega, was arrested in the presence of most of his fellow villagers and taken to an unknown destination by EPRDF troops on 3.2.96. Soldiers returned to his house on 18.2.96 and were prevented from burning down

his two houses by village elders. The houses were sealed off and Ali's 23 family members are living in the open, with no access to belongings or food. (2).

Imprisonments etc

Rasim (Ali) Fet, son of Ali Fet (see Disappearances, above), has been in prison in Zeri town, 180km east of Addis Ababa, in Adami Tulla Woreda, since 1992 (2).

A relative of Rasim, from the village between Gidami and Dembi Dollo (see Ali Fet, Disappearances, above), named *Fet Yadata*, has recently had 67 cows, 8 horses, 4 mules, 2 donkeys and 36 sheep taken by EPRDF soldiers (2).

The following, all believed to be farmers, from Manu Sibru district, W.Wallega were detained without warrant at Mendi Police Headquarters in November, 1995 :-

Totoba Hundessa,

Ayana Ligid,

Salamon Dhuguma,

Mustefa Tarressa and

Habte Ashana, from Babe Tobara village.

Ahmed Garba and

Kamal Garba, from Darge Tobara village. (1)

The following from Horo Guduru, Dadu 01 Kebele, Wallega, were illegally detained in December, 1995 :-

Tulu Nagara, teacher

Gidisa Duressa, teacher

Melesse Namara, farmer

Belete Bane, farmer

Gadissa Bayana, trader

Zelege Bakare, an elder of 53 from the Molale Handode farmers' village

Family visits were forbidden after the prisoners told of their being tortured. (1).

Also illegally held in December 1995, at Shambo District detention centre, Bore Guduru, Wallega, were the following. All are farmers unless otherwise stated :-

Dugassa Furi

Mulugeta Kunsu

Idossa Ayana

Negash Edosa

Tadasse Burka

Gadissa Mulata

Marga Toleera, trader

Tollera Deresa, trader

Dasalegn Juria & wife, traders

Dhaba Lamessa, Head of Guduru district Agriculture. (1).

The following were taken in December, 1995 to Gida Kiramu detention centre, Horo Guduru, E.Wallega :-

Abdelle Amdihun, Gida district Administrator

Abdissa Kitila, an aged farmer in Abey Chomes Hachama Migira village, Horo Guduru, was detained in Dec. 1995 (1).

Teachers, whose names are not known, were dismissed from the Arbi Gebeya elementary school and are being held at Jida Ayana EPRDF detention center. Reported February 1996 (1).

Haile Ayana, OPDO/EPRDF Security Head for Ebantu district, is in detention as of February 1996 (1).

Asfaw Mekonen, a "prominent" OPDO/EPRDF Regional Administrator has been detained in Jimma, South Western Army Headquarters, December '95/January '96. (1).

Kasa Banja and 2 other people were arrested on 19.1.96 and are being held incommunicado in the Lalo Airs District (1).

Olana Bati, 75 yr old retired lawyer and prominent elder of Nekemte, Wollega, has been imprisoned for the 7th time since 1992. He was arrested in Nekemte on 18.2.96. He was detained in October 1994, severely beaten and threatened with death, and held by the local security services for three months despite court orders for his release. (8).

Asrat Buli, a medical doctor at Fincha sugar factory near Bako, Wollega, was arrested on 15.2.96. (8).

SOUTHERN OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

Killings

Sheikh Jeilan Khadir, leader of the Oda Chafe Mosque, Agarfa District, Bale, and three fellow worshippers attending Ramadan prayers, were killed in the mosque in January, 1996. The others killed were :-

Abdurazak Aba Malka

Sheikh Ali Aba Melka and

Abdlsabur Muhammed.

They were killed by EPRDF soldiers who claimed those killed were OLF supporters. (1)

Ahmud Fate, 70, was killed in the Gorro district of Ginir, Bale region. Reported February 1996, (1).

Disappearances Imprisonment etc

Many Oromo nationals in Borana have been arrested without warrant by EPRDF soldiers. They are kept in the following army camps:

1) Finchawa

2) Hagare Mariam

3) Mellra Sodda and

4) Dawa Digatte.

The number of detainees is

"large but figures could not be compiled because travelling into the area and visits by family are forbidden."

Two of those imprisoned at the Hagare Mariam army camp are Oromo language teachers named :-

Ganada Duli and

Dida Wake. Both of them were beaten several nights severely and their homes were searched without any legal procedure. They are both married and are incommunicado with their families. Most of the other detainees are farmers of the local Oromo nomadic society, here in many cases the cattle are looted by the army. The following people were arrested and their cattle were taken by force from the other family members, leaving the family without any means to survive because the only means of survival in that arid zone is dairy products.

Those who lost their cattle (looted by the EPRDF army) are :-

Wata Fanja, Finchawa village and

Dhugo Gnyye, from Dawa Digate village. The number of cattle taken and the names of those other people is not available at the time. The reason why they are kept at army camps are to torture them during the nights, beating instep of the feet is common (witnesses), many farmers lost their cattle because the EPRDF arrested almost all the herdsmen they find at water wells or on grazing fields." (1).

NAIROBI, KENYA

Five members of the Oromo Liberation Front, all legal residents or registered refugees with UNHCR in Nairobi, were arrested by Kenyan officials on 21/22.3.96 and told they were to be deported to Addis Ababa. They are *Dima Noggo* (former Minister of Information in the Transitional Government of Ethiopia and legally resident in Nairobi since 1993), *Mekonnen Galan* (businessman, living with his family in Nairobi since 1992), *Tesfaye Dinsa* (registered refugee since 1980), *Hailu Darge* (registered refugee since 1993) and *Dula Bosona* (registered refugee since 1990). Following mediation by Amnesty International and UNHCR, the five will now be deported to countries other than Ethiopia, to be arranged by UNHCR. *Dima Noggo* was deported, initially to England, on April 1st. (7).

Wariyo Galgalo, living in the Centre for Victims of Violence on the outskirts of Nairobi, was paralysed following torture by government forces in Ethiopia in 1994 when he and another Oromo were arrested in March 1995. The Ethiopian government were believed to want them deported to Ethiopia. (7).

DISMISSALS

In December 1995, the following teachers were dismissed in Ebantu District, Horo Guduru, E. Wallega:-

Wakitola Hunde,

Merga Ayana

Fatana Mengesha

Hirdashe Jilo

Ragassa Jilo

Amsalu Mengesha

Belay Frede

Wayessa Chibisa

Ms Zewuditu Birke

Geneti Meshesha

Nigussie Fetensa

Dessu Jilo

Yadata Tufa

Abara Tufa

Birile Birhanu

Tamiru Mengesha

Asefa Alemayehu

Adimassu Alemu

Miss Aster, secretary/typist (1).

The following are list of killings and abductions which took place over the last two years but have not previously been recorded by the Oromia Support Group. The list doesnot include victims of mass arrests and executions in Adama, Horro Guduru, Limmu, Sigimo Gattira (over 300 summarily executed), Hageremariam, Yabello, Megga and Efero. (10)

SUMMARY EXECUTIONS

1. Abate Jote, Walaga
1. Abdela Hassen, Chiro Gowagew
2. Abdella Mohamed Bakar, Mi'eso Matadaima
3. Abdlahi Ali, Darolabu
4. Abdulahi Bashiro, Darolabu Galmajuju
5. Abdulahi Usman, Kab Hafdam, Harerge
6. Abdulahi Aliy Waday, Mi'eso
7. Abdulwas Abdi-Ali, Gorgutu Sapolo
8. Abicho Mohamed, Magna Warqi, Arsi
9. Abraham Kidane, Naqamte, Walaga
10. Aduliwahab Adem, Hafdam, Harerge
11. Ahmed Gari Said, Gorgutu, Geyrero
12. Ahmed Adem Abdu, Mi'eso Matadaima
13. Ahmed Hasen Alisho, Chiro Mudachok
14. Ahmed Sufian Aliy, Darolabu
15. Ahmed Ali Waday, Darolabu
16. Ahmedin Adem Wariyo, Darolabu
17. Aisha Habib Mume, Dadar Harowacha
18. Aliy Mumad Guracho, Chiro Mudachok
19. Aliy Ahmed Umer, Chiro Mudachok
20. Aliy Husein, Darobula
21. Aliy Guracha Borko, Boka
22. Amanu Girma, Neqete
23. Ashenafi Xilaye, Dembi Dolo, Walaga
24. Asirar Harun, Darolabu
25. Badhane Gashu, Iddi Lola, Moyale
26. Bushira Hasen, Hafdam, Harerge
27. Chala Kebebe, Gindeberet, Shewa
28. Darara Kafane, Ambo
29. Diglo Ali, Boka
30. Faxuma Idris, Hamareysa
31. Haji Kamal Musa, Metu
32. Halela Amansisa, Mi'eso Dirba
33. Hasen Shanko, Boke
34. Hasen Ibro Dadi, Chiro Mudachok
35. Hasen Bale, Habro Defo
36. Ibro Diglo Ali, Boke
37. Izedin Ababor, Jima
38. Jamal Bakaro Waday, Hafdam, Harerge
39. Jamal Husein Waday, Darolabu
40. Jamal Dhuga, Hafdam, Harerge
41. Kedija Baker, Boke
42. Magarsa Bali, Gedo, Shewa
43. Mohamed Ibrahim, Boke
44. Mohamed Hashim, Boke
45. Mohammed Amin Ababor, Jima
46. Mohammed Ahmed, Chiro Mudachok
47. Mohammed Abdulaziz, Killed in Woliso, Shewa
48. Muktar Hamid Henan, Boke
49. Nasrodin Qemer Mohamed, Chiro Qune
50. Nigusse Hey, East Hararge
51. Nur Kamal Muche, Chiro Mudachok
52. Olqaba Batu, East Hararge
53. Qanansisa Mekonen, Naqamte
54. Qasim Ahmeyu, Chiro Mudachok
55. Redwan Umer Amayu, Gubaqoricha
56. Shafi Umer Yesuf, Haromaya, Harerge
57. Sheh Abdela Umer Darolabu Horatu
58. Sheh Harun Abdule Umer, Darolabu Michata
59. Sheh Yusuf Asdubiq, Chiro Mudachok
60. Sheh Adem Boru, Chiro Mudachok
61. Sheh Abdela Hashi Aliy, Boke
62. Sheh Mustafa Mohamed, Darolabu, Ambo
63. Sheh Husein Fadis, Darolabu
64. Sheh Abduraq Said, Chiro Mudachok
65. Sheh Mohamed Hasen Xahir, Darolabu
66. Sheh Husein Ahmed Said, Boke
67. Sheh Ahmed Abdulahi Bilal, Mi'eso Matadaima
68. Sheh Ibrahim Adem Said, Mi'eso Matadaima
69. Sheh Kamal Xaha Ibrahim, Mi'eso Dirba
70. Sheh Harun Tusha, Boka
71. Sheh Abdulahi Usman, Gorgutu Sapolo
72. Sheh Ali Abagano, Agarfa, Bale
73. Sheh Jailan Kadir, Agarfa, Bale
74. Sheh Abdulraziq Abamalka, Agarfa, Bale

75. Sheh Abdulsabur Mohamed, Agarfa, Bale
76. Sufian Aliy Abayu, Darolabu
77. Sufian Musa, East Hararge
78. Sultan Fato, Gugujaju Michata
79. Tadesse Beriso, Negele, Borana
80. Tadesse Melaku, Waliso, Shewa
81. Tareqegn Amante, Debre Birhan
82. Umer Said Oda, Darolabu
83. Usman Umer, Fora Gubaqoricha

84. Waquma Maru, Waliso, Shewa
85. Warqitu Diana, Dawa, Shewa
86. Wayessa Tesema, Dawa, Shewa
87. Yaqub Abdela Borko, Boka
88. Yaya Diglo Ali, Boke
89. Zakir Shih Yusuf, Darolabu Galmajuju
90. Zekaria Abdulahi, Haromaya, Hararge
91. Ziad Mohamed Hasen, Darolabu

ABDUCTIONS, IMPRISONMENT AND DISAPPEARANCES ETC.

(Some of the following might have been murdered or released)

1. Abdata Hora, Ambo
2. Abdisa Niguse, Buluq, Horo Gudru
3. Abdu Adem, Naqamte
4. Abdulahi Yesuf, Sigmona Gatira
5. Abdulsemed Waliye, Gudaya, Walaga
6. Abdurahiman Jebel, Sigmona Gatira
7. Abdusemed Idris, Dire Dawa
8. Adugna Heyo, Waliso, Shewa
9. Ahmed Mohamed, Sigmona Gatira
10. Ahmed Umer, Laga Harre
11. Aklilu Ayele, Addis Abeba
12. Alemayehu Wayessa, Waliso, Shewa
13. Alemu Galatu, Waliso, Shewa
14. Aliy Temam, Sigmona Gatira
15. Asfaw Roro, Guliso, Walaga
16. Asrat Bekule, Addis Abeba
17. Asredin Jamal, Addis Abeba
18. Baharsitu Obsa (Artist), Dire Dawa
19. Baker Ali, Dire Dawa
20. Banacha Darso, Borana
21. Bayisa Iticha, Gindeberet, Shewa
22. Bekele Madisa, Addis Abeba
23. Beqele Abebe, Ambo
24. Bogalech Tolasa, Adama
25. Buli Galata, Naqamte
26. Chawaqa Midheqsa, Maqi, Shewa
27. Dadhi Midheqsa, Maqi, Shewa
28. Dagaga Tufa, Maqi, Shewa
29. Dalasa Barsisa, Chaliya, Gedo, Shewa
30. Debele Gebre, Waliso, Shewa
31. Dendena Gurmu, Addis Abeba
32. Dereje Dame, Addis Abeba
33. Dereje Lamessa, Buluq
34. Desalegn Abdi, Waliso, Shewa
35. Desalegn Yadate, Buluq
36. Dr Asrat Buli, Fincha'a, Walaga
37. Ganale Dhaba, Borana
38. Husein Mustafa, Buluq
39. Husein Ahmed, Chole, Arsi
40. Ibrahim Mengesha, Gafarsa, Wenji
41. Kamalu (Teenage girl), Gudaya
42. Kasaye Shanqo, Borana
43. Kebede Disasa, East Shewa
44. Kedir Abderahman, Sigmona Gatira
45. Kumsa Burayu (Journalist), Addis Abeba
46. Magarsa Balam, Jara Machata, Shewa
47. Makonin Gamada, Gudaya
48. Mamo Namara, Gimbi, Walaga
49. Mengistu Biru, Waliso, Shewa
50. Mohamed Ahmed Domina, Horomaya, East Hararge
51. Mohamed Amin Ahmed, Harar
52. Mohamed Xahir, Sigmona Gatira
53. Mohamed Huqa, Borana
54. Mohammed Adem, Dire Dawa
55. Motuma Abdisa, Gindeberet, Shewa
56. Mulugeta Kumsa, Buluq
57. Muqa Qaqa, Buluq
58. Mustefa Kelil, Sigmona Gatira
59. Nazmu Abdela, Buluq
60. Obbo Garomsa, Ambo
61. Obbo Beyene (teacher), Gudaya
62. Obbo Begna, Gudaya
63. Olana Bati, Naqamte
64. Rafisa Danbaba, Buluq
65. Sado Shuqa, Walo Yesus, Dire Dawa
66. Said Abdulkerim, Sigmona Gatira
67. Shabe Shako (Artist), Goba, Bale
68. Taye Tesema, Addis Abeba
69. Tesfaye Dinagde, Naqamte

70. Teshome Motuma, Gindeberet, Shewa
71. Tolasa Gonde, Buluq
72. Umer Idris, Sigmona Gatira
73. Usman Abdela, Samamona Gatira
74. Xena Getahun, Gudaya
75. Xobiya Gobana, Gudaya
76. Zerihun Yadata, Buluq, Horo Gudru
77. Zeritu Kebede Iticha, Gindeberet, Shewa