
PRESS RELEASE - June/July 1996.

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

The Oromia Support Group has now reported 1,178 extra-judicial killings and 431 disappearances of civilians suspected of supporting groups opposing the government. Most of these have been Oromo people. Tens of thousands of civilians have been imprisoned. 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 24, March 1996.
2. Clandestine Human Rights Organisation A, Addis Ababa, Bulletin 25, May 1996.
3. Urji newspaper, Addis Ababa, 16.4.96.
4. Statement from victim's relative, Canada, April/May 1996.
5. Statement from victim's relative, Canada, 10.5.96.
6. Correspondent from Addis Ababa, 18.4.96.
7. Statement from victim's relative, Canada, April/May 1996.
8. Statement from victim's relative, Canada, 10.5.96.
9. Correspondent from USA, recently returned from Oromia/Ethiopia, 25.3.96.
10. Urji newspaper, Addis Ababa, 23.4.96.
11. Correspondent L. G. from Ethiopia, 7.4.96.
12. Statement from Oromo national, Canada, April 1996
13. Addis Tribune newspaper, Addis Ababa, 21.6.96.
14. Amnesty International Urgent Action appeal, London, 23.4.96.
15. Oromo Bulletin, OLF Office, Washington, DC, USA, December 1995.
16. Clandestine Human Rights Organisation B, Addis Ababa, Memorandum 3, 1.4.96.
17. Ethiopian Human Rights Council Urgent Report No.2/1996, 6.5.96.
18. Oromo Bulletin, OLF Office, Washington, DC, USA, March 1996.
19. Correspondent from Addis Ababa, 4.4.96.
20. Correspondent from Harar, Ethiopia, 12.6.96.
21. Terre des Hommes, The Hague, Netherlands, 22.4.96.
22. New African magazine, London, June 1996.
23. Statement from victim's relative, USA, April 1996.
24. Ogaden Community Association of Ontario, Press Release, 5.5.96, and
Ogaden National Liberation Front Statement, London, 24.3.96.
25. "The Untold Story of the Shekacho People" by Achame Shana, Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Action Group,
Reading, UK.
26. Correspondent from Sudan, April 1996.
27. Letter to Oromo national living in Canada, from Oromia, 13.5.96.
28. Addis Tribune newspaper, Addis Ababa, 14.6.96.
29. Ethiopian Human Rights Council Special Report No2/1996, 9.4.96.
30. Ethiopian Human Rights Council report, Addis Ababa, February-April 1996.
31. Statement by Dr Addisu Beyene, Executive Director of Oromo Relief Association, 8.5.96.
32. Oromo Relief Association, London, 1.6.96.

"(T)he EPRDF plan to devastate Oromo politically, economically, socially and culturally, has...been stepped up" (1).

ADDIS ABABA AND CENTRAL OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

Killings

The names of eight of those killed when government troops opened fire on civilians involved in the Amwar Mosque riot in Addis Ababa on 21.2.95 (see June 1995 press release) are :-

Mesma Gihar
Delecha Derib
Akimal Habib

Mechal Sherif
Shemsu Mohamed

(1).

Keteme Bekele Munnicha, was killed in late July 1995, after being taken from Adadi Mariam village and detained in Leman EPRDF camp, Soddo, Showa. He was found in a field, with many bullet wounds. (1).

Hirpo Tikka, from Shashamane, was shot dead by government agents, mid-September 1995 (1).

"Two dead bodies were displayed in Katchisa town", W.Showa (reported March 1995). They had been shot by EPRDF troops and locals were forbidden at gunpoint from burying them. (1).

Fuad Abdulkarim and

Mahadi Jemal, both members of the police force, in Asako area of Arboye, Arsi, were killed by EPRDF militia in November 1995 (1).

Hassan Rashid, a known OLF supporter, was killed in Wollo, mid-November 1995 (1).

Tilahun Gabre Tsadik and

Assefa Demissie were kidnapped in Addis Ababa on 14.3.96 and found dead in Ambo (125 km west of Addis) (1).

Qaqqabaa Jabeessaa, a 75 year old from Qaqallii Peasant village, W.Showa, died after being beaten for "many days" and falling from a tree in which he had been suspended by rope, April 1996, (2).

Gazu/Yigezu Ida'e, of Macha Peasant village, Jaldu, W.Showa, was killed in April 1996 and his body dragged along the road by car "to intimidate others" (2, 3).

Abdul-samad Mohamed, Addis Ababa, was shot dead in the capital on 20.4.96 (2).

Disappearances

Reta Moossissaa, a driver for the OLF when they were in the Transitional Government, disappeared in mid-1992, from Addis Ababa (4).

Megersa Balami, disappeared in Addis Ababa, June 1995 (1).

Habib Kedir Gobeni (right), ex-Chairman of Arsi Oromo Youth Association, previously an active member of the Oromo Student Association of Addis Ababa University, was serving as head of department of Administration and Finance, E. Showa Finance Bureau, when he disappeared in August 1995 (6).



Habib Kedir Gobeni

Lamma Worqee, a labour union activist who spent 10 yrs in prison under the Dergue, from Adama (Nazareth), E.Showa, disappeared in Addis Ababa December 1995/January 1996 (7).

Bulti Gurmessa, disappeared in Addis Ababa, mid-March 1996 (2).

Kalid Idris Imam,
Mr Gamachu and
Mr Girma disappeared from the capital on 24.4.96 (2).

Asledin Sheik Mohamed Sheik Adam (right), 23 yrs, was taken by plain clothes security men from his home in the Rafael area, Kebele 10, Addis Ababa, on 30.7.94, and has not been heard of since. This disappearance may be that reported as Asledin Sheik Jamal (in November 1994 press release). (5).



Asledin Sheik Mohamed Sheik Adam

Imprisonment etc

91 Oromo are being illegally held at a **secret detention centre** at Leman town, Qarsa Malima Sodo area (on the way to Butajira town), Showa. They have been detained since July 1995, are incommunicado in a "very small room", without medication and being fed with "one dry bread daily". Of the 91, only the following are named :-

- Tesfaye Fita, farmer from Haro Bitacho
- Mr Bacha, farmer from Haro Kusae
- Adunya Ebisa, farmer from Robe Tal-Tale
- Kasahun Danboba, student from Tiya town
- Alemu Gobu, farmer from Warko
- Mesfin Gutama, farmer from Haro Kusae, and his father-Gutama Dabela
- Mr Tadase, a driver of the St George Brewery, Addis Ababa, kidnapped in the capital, seriously ill following several nightly beatings
- Mulata Bagasha, partially paralysed following beatings (1).

The wave of disappearances and imprisonments in Showa and Arsi in August 1995 was reported in the October 1995 press release. Further imprisonments have been reported by a correspondent from Addis Ababa. These are :-

- Kedir Abdella, Cashier of E.Showa Zone Natural Resources Dept., imprisoned 7.8.95, at Adama (Nazareth),
- Lemma Dingu, Legal Prosecutor, imprisoned 16.8.95, Addis Ababa,
- Afata Qabata, Head of the Technical Dept., Adama Tractor Factory, imprisoned 6.9.95, at Adama (Nazareth),
- Ibrahim Bulu, taxi driver, imprisoned 26.8.95, Shashamane,
- Degu Benya, Head of E.Showa Zone Transportation and Communication Dept, imprisoned 7.9.95, Adama (Nazareth), and
- Genemo Desiso, nurse, imprisoned 8.9.95, Adama (Nazareth) (6).

Tenaye Woyessa,
Reta Woyessa and

Tadessa Demissie, all businessmen from rural areas, living in rented accomodation in Addis Ababa, were reported in April to have been detained in No.8 District Police Station, Addis Ababa, for over 7 months. The cause for their detention is not known. (3).

A 19 yr old man (name withheld by request) from the old airport area of Addis Ababa, was taken by government employees one night in December 1995 in an attempt to force him to reveal the location of his father, in hiding in the capital since being sacked from Fincaa Sugar factory. He was **whipped with electric wire and beaten** around the head. His injuries have resulted in mental subnormality and loss of speech. (8).

The Special Investigation Branch at Maikelawi, Addis Ababa, is now known to hold among its prisoners, the following :-

Kasahun Habte, who disappeared 4 years ago
Kamal Kalbessa, transferred from Zeway detention centre
Kifle Desta Wakene, from Shakiso-Borana area
Abdul Nassir and 5 other Sudanese nationals
Dabala Hailemariam, from Ambo
Tasfaye Fufa, from Ambo (see below)
Mr Worku, head of Ambo prison
Mr Ankerkibachewu and
Mr Gurmu, both surveyors from Makale Airport Construction
Walter Negus Mekonnen (2).

The following prisoners at Maikelawi, almost all arrested in February 1996, are reported to have been tortured :-

Alemayehu Galata
Fufa Dhugo
Awaqa Chimssa
Tasfaye Fufa (mentioned above)
Dabala HaileMariam
Darara Bayisa (possibly the same Darara Bayisa tortured in February 1994 - see December 1995 press release)
Fayera Abdisa
Mikael Zarihun
Fromssa Aga (reported disappeared in January 1996 - see February press release)

The first six of these are reported to have had their testicles "hammered". (9).

Terfa Kumsa Burka, an Oromo linguist of Woreda 8, Addis Ababa, was kept incommunicado for two weeks after being arrested 18.2.96. U.S. Embassy staff secured his release on bail ; he is naturalised American. (1).

An unidentified man was kidnapped in Addis Ababa by occupants of a car with the registration plate 021349, at 4.00pm, 25.2.96 (1).

Adam Gariso, from Arsi, was **shot** in the hand by EPRDF soldiers after police refused a judge's order to release him from prison. He was reported in March to be at Assela hospital. (1).

Members of the family of Lieutenant Abera Legesse, living in Wadessa area, Diki Kebele, Ambo, W.Showa, were rounded up and imprisoned on 6.3.96. They were accused of being OLF supporters and questioned about Lieut. Legesse's whereabouts. He was an officer in the Dergue army and has not been in contact with his family for 11 years. Of the 12 arrested, the following are named :-

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mrs Boge Tegeny, 70+ yrs | Homa Debisa, 80+ |
| Edae Debisa, 80+ | Mrs Burane Ballina, 40+ |
| Mrs Hirpe Legesse, 40+ | Mrs Worke Legesse, 35+ |
| Miss Dai Legesse, 20+ | Buraa Irkoo, 30+ |
| Mitiku Homa, 25+ | Fufa Uka, 55+ |
| Gabisa Araarsa, 35+ | |

(10).

A civil servant and ex-representative of the OLF (name withheld) was released from prison in Addis Ababa recently after being **tortured** and imprisoned for one month. He was whipped with electric wire while pincers were applied to the back of one hand. After he regained consciousness he remained, bound hand and foot, lying, unable even to turn over, for 48 hrs in solitary confinement without food or water. Sores on his body were left infected and untreated for the month of his confinement. His left hand remains partially paralysed. He was warned not to contact friends about his experiences. (11).

Yonatan Yishak was imprisoned in Addis Ababa in mid-March. He had been campaigning about the extra-judicial killing of his son, Henoch Yonatan. A photograph of the dead body of his son, published in OSG's February 1996 press release, appeared on the front page of "Urji" independent newspaper on the day of Mr Yishak's abduction. Despite his son's name not being published in "Urji", Mr Yishak was accused of giving the original photograph to Sue Pollock, who forwarded it to OSG. **Thus the EPRDF government have admitted killing Henoch Yonatan.** (12).

Hailu Tarfassa Tasse, of Woreda 08, Kebele 14, Addis Ababa, an employee of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and a long term ex-prisoner under the Dergue regime, was taken on 17.4.96. He was held incommunicado and untraceable by his family and friends (2, 10, 14). Amnesty International issued an Urgent Action appeal on his behalf (14) and the All Africa Press Service revealed on 30.5.96 that he was being held at the Central Police Station in the capital.

Among 80 people detained from Urga Ilaali village, Jaldu district, W.Showa, April 1996, are :-

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Ulfata Fayisa, 70 yrs | Nagasa Lata, 80 yrs | |
| Bashana Binagde, businessman, 55 | Ragasa Mamo, office clerk, 36 | |
| Berhanu Gudisa, teacher, 37 | Getu Mamo, businessman, 39 | (2, 3). |

Sheik Mohamed Husen and Sheik Abdusalam, of Combe, Addis Ababa, were taken on 19.4.96. Ten armed security men had searched the house of Sheik Mohamed prior to the abduction. (10).

A "reliable source" has reported that there are over 1,900 detainees, none of them charged, at Adama (Nazareth), S.Showa, April 1996 (2).

Dr Taye, President of the Ethiopian Teachers Association, was arrested on arrival at Bole airport, Addis Ababa, on returning from Europe, on 30.5.96 (13).

Three more **secret detention centres** are identified (in addition to the 25 in the February press release). They are beyond (west of) Ambo, W.Showa. They are at :-

- Gedo (main road to Nekemte, Wollega) - 200 detainees
- Chabi Djaldu road - over 100 detainees
- Babichu - number unknown. (1).

It was reported in December 1995 that over 100 people were being held in Mugi town, W.Showa, and that all detainees had been tortured by tying their hands behind their back with cord soaked in kerosene and gunpowder (15).

Of the mourners of Darara Kafana who were arrested in Ambo, W.Showa, in September 1994 (see press release November 1994) 45 elders have appeared in court and been released on bail, the court having decided that there was no case against them. Administrators in Ambo closed down the businesses of the following, who were released, on 22.2.96 :-

- Baqala Sita, stone crushing plant
- Mr Daqa, hotel and restaurant
- Dandana Gurmu, oil mill
- Marga Maganta, hotel and restaurant
- Dalasa Boka, hotel and restaurant

Others, who were civil servants, have been sacked. (9).

Prison conditions at Zeway, Arsi.

Unlike the Dergue officials facing war crimes trials, the prisoners in Zeway are said by two sources (b, e) to be suffering shortage of food, clothing and exercise. Many are half naked. Since an alleged escape at the turn of the year, family visits (with clothing and food) and exchange of letters have been banned. There is no communication between cells. Those with contagious diseases are not separated or treated. Exercise is limited to two toilet visits of a few minutes each, per 24 hrs.

Most prisoners have not been charged and have been detained for four years. Those that have appeared in court have been weak with hunger and chained by the hands, despite court order to the contrary.

Following the alleged escape, an unknown prisoner was tortured to death (16). Files on escapees are kept open. The closure of the file on Qelbessa Hordoffa is thought to signify his execution.

There is only one named witness against the prisoners, an ex-deputy officer at Didessa camp, Shimendin Legesse, who merely confirmed the presence of 80 of the prisoners at that camp (16).

There are now 785 prisoners there, including at least 103 from Illubabor and Jimma, and 218 transferred from Harar, Hararge, in April 1995 (2).

Despite pleas, the International Commission of the Red Cross, has not visited the prison. The Danish section of the International Commission of Jurors, which promised assistance, has left the country (2, 16).

Mistreatment of street children and other homeless persons

The Ethiopian Human Rights Council reported on 6.5.96 that the police in Addis Ababa have been attempting to rid the streets of homeless children, beggars and prostitutes, by removing them to the outskirts of the city at night. Of the 22 who have lodged complaints with EHRCO, 17 are teenagers. (17).

EASTERN OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

Killings

Mammad Musa, Kadir neighbourhood, Fallana district, Hararge, and his 3 yr old child were bayoneted to death by government forces, and their home looted of 1,000 Birr and two oxen, in October, 1995 (18).

An unnamed person from Borfe village, Dhaetti, Hararge, was executed in public, for being an OLF supporter, in October, 1995 (18).

Mammad Sheka, Melka Rafu village, Hararge, a music cassette distributor, was killed by EPRDF soldiers for "distributing Oromo music", in October, 1995. (18).

Mammad Sire Himan, Borse village, Lazima, Hararge, was found murdered in a prison cell, and Mammad Abirasho, Melka Rafu village, Hararge, was bayoneted to death and his shop looted by government forces, in late 1995 (18).

Mr Dime, from Melka Djabdu, near Dire Dawa, E.Hararge, was killed in November 1995 (1).

Mohamed Ibrahim and "other prisoners", in Sibilu, Hararge, were taken from prison, executed and left in a field, in November, 1995 (18).

Hasan Usen, Kadir village, Waday, Hararge, was burnt to death when thrown into a blazing barn by government forces, 22.11.95 (18).

Bakare Ibrahim and

Mammade Ibrahim were burnt to death in their home in Kadir village, Kombolcha, E.Hararge, by EPRDF forces on 7.12.95 (18).

An unnamed person in Boke village, Gerada, Hararge, was similarly killed on 12.12.95 (18).

Bakar Ibrahim,
Mammad Ibrahim,
Abdi Sheka and
Ibsa Dhaka, Kako district, Hararge, "were **tormented by cutting off their limbs and executed in public**".
Their bodies were left in an open field. December, 1995 (18).

Usmail Ibrahim, Chafe Annani village, Boke area, Hararge, was killed by EPRDF soldiers and his farm looted of 2,000 Birr and 5 cattle, in late December, 1995. At the same time, Hasan Ibrahim was shot and wounded. (18).

Mohamed Ahmed,
Usmail Tahir,
Aliyyi Ahmed Sadi and
Mohamed Siyyo, of Samte village, Hararge, were executed in public in December, 1995, for allegedly supporting the OLF (18).

Ibrahim Bakar Alisho, Kako village, Ela Dima, Hararge, was killed by EPRDF soldiers when resisting arrest in late December, 1995 (18).

An unnamed individual was shot dead in Mi'ecessoo, W.Hararge, in late March/early April, 1996 (19).

Ms Qamariyaa Shabuu, 18 yrs, from Robe 01, Bale, died in prison in April 1996, from injuries received after several days of **torture** and an ensuing abortion. She was being questioned on the whereabouts of her husband, Sani Abdalla, after his fleeing the neighbourhood because of harassment by the authorities. (2).

Two peasants, travelling on a bus between Ciroo (Aseb-Tefari) and Mi'ecessoo, W.Hararge, were shot dead by an EPRDF soldier at a road checkpoint on 10.6.96. They were shot because no-one admitted carrying a packet of medication discovered on the bus. The ensuing disturbance was settled by locally based soldiers arresting victims' relatives. (20).

NGO workers killed in Dire Dawa

Mr Herman Herder, 39 yr old Nairobi-based representative of the Non-Governmental Organisation, Terre des Hommes Netherlands, was visiting Dire Dawa to inspect a possible future project, in March. He was accompanied by Eshetu Abebe, an employee of the Good Shepherd Foundation, an Addis Ababa-based NGO, and Teshome Woldeyes, an employee of a Dutch aid agency, seconded to the Good Shepherd Foundation.

Mr Herder was in the Taiwan market when he was shot in the head at close range at about 5.30pm, Sunday March 3rd. He was not robbed. Eshetu Abebe was shot dead on March 6th, when according to police authorities, he tried to escape when being transferred from the police station in Dire Dawa. It is rumoured that his body showed signs of torture.

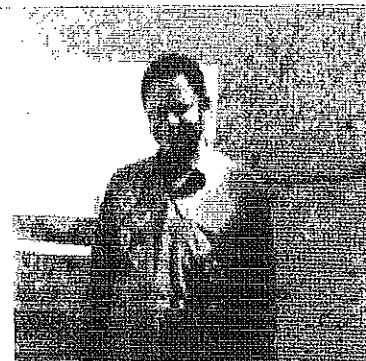
Teshome Woldeyes and the director of the Good Shepherd Foundation were imprisoned and later released. The circumstances of Mr Abebe's death might indicate that both his murder and that of Mr Herder were carried out by government forces, but there is no proof of this. (21).

Disappearances

Ismail Ali Ibrahim, Dire Dawa, disappeared in September 1995 (1).

Baharsitu Obsa, the singer from Addis Ababa, whose arrest in February in Dire Dawa was reported in the April press release, has since become untraceable (1).

Ahmed Mohamed, (see photo, right) the director of the Dire Dawa office of the Oromo Relief Association has disappeared. His arrest in February was reported in that month's press release,. It is feared that he has been killed (1, 32).



Ahmed Mohamed

Imprisonment etc

Qadiro Abdo is the only identified prisoner of 7 being held at Dange Farmers village, Gasara district, Bale. It is not stated whether or not this and the following are official places of detention.

At Dallo Manna detention centre, Bale, the following are being held :-

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Bayan Qasim, trader | Kadir Hussein, post office worker |
| Hasan Chenchento, trader | Alimu Bagasha, trader |
| Mr Belete, health worker | Mr Aman, administrator |
| Mr Abdurahiman, teacher | Tabia Hussein (1). |

Recent imprisonments (reported March 1996) in Dire Dawa, E.Hararge, include :-

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Ashirafa Guracha | Abdurahiman Aamid Yusuf |
| Dachasa Dido | Mulmuda Basha |
| Mr Amano | Mr Yasin (1). |

The following were reported to be held at Agarfa detention centre, Bale, in April 1996 :-

| | |
|--|------|
| Haji Ibrahim Baharu, Kebele 01, Agarfa | |
| Mama Adam, Kebele 01, Agarfa | |
| Qadi Dalu, Ilani village | |
| Mr Shubile, Kebele 01, Agarfa | (2). |

At Robe detention centre, Bale, among those being held in April 1996 are :-

| | |
|---|------|
| Haji Abdo Wayyu and | |
| Muktar Haji Abdu, of Kebele 01, Robe, and | |
| Hussen Mamu, | |
| Abubakar Hussen, | |
| Hassan Haji, | |
| Taha Kadir, | |
| Musa Muhammad, | |
| Muzeyin Mahammad, | |
| Haji Alo Abas and | |
| Kasim Mohammad, of Kebele 03, Robe | (2). |

And at Goba detention centre, Bale, April 1996, are :-

Mohamed Ibrahim, Kebele 04, Goba
Sheik Ali Ibrahim, Kebele 02, Goba (2).

EPRDF administrators of Dire Dawa are "becoming rich by looting, unlawful searches, confiscation and illegal trading" (1).

Ibrahim Mohamed and

Mohamed Ismael both fled from Dallo Manna, Bale, in July 1995 because of intimidation and harassment. The latter had 4000 Birr (600 \$) taken from his home when it was searched. (1).

In the Gololcha district of Bale, more than 200 houses of Oromo civilians were burned down by EPRDF troops in October 1995. "Confiscation of property and animals, and burning of crops are still going on unabated"(1, 9).

WESTERN OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

Killings

Tesfaye Hundessa was shot dead while farming, by the EPRDF administrator of his village of Sayo Mobarra, 600km west of Addis Ababa, in 1993 (22). (The previously reported murder of a government employee of the same name on 16.11.95 refers to a different incident).

Fite Yadata Hirpha, Kelem district, Hawa Walal, Wollega, is believed to have been executed by firing squad on 3.2.96. The 60 year old man had previously had 67 cattle, 38 sheep, 4 mules and 2 donkeys confiscated by EPRDF soldiers. (1).

Wasanu Hordofa, a youngster from Oda Arjo Peasant village, Arjo, Wollega, was "gunned down" in February 1996 (2).

Mr Dinbasha, Chanka area, Dembi Dollo, Wollega was killed in February 1996 (2).

Disappearances

Dr Asrat Buli, whose arrest at Finchaa Sugar Project in February 1996 was reported in the April press release, has since become untraceable (1).

Imprisonment etc

In December 1995 it was reported that a young man, Zaferan Mohamed, was so badly **tortured** with electric shocks, while being held in Mattu, Illubabor, that he had to be sent home as his life was in danger (15).

Belay Yadeta, a man in his fifties, from Gimbi, Wollega, was imprisoned 20.1.96 and later transferred to hospital. At the time of his abduction EPRDF troops stole his television and video player. (4).

Tadasse Ayana

Kajella Abdata and

Akililu Tilahun, of Mendi, Wollega, and

Belay Yadata and

Amanuel Roro, of Gimbi, Wollega, all prominent coffee traders, have been arrested and are being held in Gimbi (reported March 1996) (1).

Ligdi Salbana, of Nejo, Wollega, was beaten in public and arrested (reported March 1996) (1).

Geneti Raga and

Tesfaye Tulamma, both ex-army personnel, were arrested in Enango, Wollega (reported March 1996) (1).

Among an unknown number of people arrested at Airo Guliso, Wollega, in March 1996 are :-

Rev. Abara Damesso

Epherem Fite

Girma Deressa and
Oluma Ayana (1).

Boka Dinsa was among 200 recently jailed in Dembi Dollo, Wollega and Mugi, W.Showa (reported March 1996) (1).

Just prior to the report in March 1996, 400 people have been detained without warrant in Gimbi prison, Wollega (1).

Bakele Disaassa, the Wollega distributor of the independent newspaper "Urji", was imprisoned in Nekemte, Wollega, on around April 10th (12).

Girma Wakshum, teacher of Qubee (Oromo alphabet in Latin characters) in Nekemte Elementary School, Wollega, was taken by plain clothes security men to prison in Nekemte and then transferred to Gute, 15-20 km away, on around 19.4.96. He was not charged. (23).

The families of the father, 76 yr old Hundessa Ebba, and the brother, Taye Hundessa, of Tesfaye Hundessa (see killings above) were forced, on threat of death, to leave the village of Sayo Mobara, 600km west of Addis Ababa and take refuge in the capital in 1993. The family's cattle and annual yield of coffee, fruit and vegetables were confiscated. Mr Ebba said "In my time I have witnessed successive governments, even the Italian fascists during their brief occupation, but none were as brutal as those ruling us today". (22).

SOUTHERN OROMIA/ETHIOPIA

Killings

Musa Abdi
Haji Abo Bariso
Mr Magarsa and
Ms Chaltu, were killed in September 1995 in Haro Dibbe, Bale (1).

Imprisonments etc

There are over 60 civilians being held at a secret detention centre at EPRDF camp 174, at Moyale, S.Borana (see February press release). The following have been detained there since December 1995 :-

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Ali Galgalo | Godana Wuqa |
| Mr Dida | Mr Balachew |
| Taju Hasan | Abera Assefa |
| Mr Alake | Tesfaye Deressa |
| Gadisa Ifa | (1). |

Wako Dhaba and
Ms Jilo Kode were reported detained there, April 1996 (2).

Being held at Liban detention centre, Borana, April 1996, are:-

Sheik Surur
Hussen Korbatu and
Adam Abdi (2).

TPLF soldiers are reported to be looting large numbers of cattle for their consumption and for sale, in Borana province (9).

OTHER AREAS

OGADENI

Killings

The following Ogadeni people are reported killed by government forces :-

Abdi-mahad Aw-Ahmed, nomad, Hayabalay, 7.12.95,
Mrs Markab M.Mursal, nomad, Garbo, 10.1.95,
Mohamed A. Abdisamad, businessman, Danood, 13.1.96. (24).

Fourteen civilians of the Dagahbur area, Ogaden, were reported killed prior to February 1996 ; 6 in Godey and Hadhawe, 2 in Bukdhabo, 3 in Bullale, and 3 in Anano.

Two girls of Garbo town witnessed the murder of their father, the burning of their house and the looting of their property, before they were raped by government forces. (24).

Disappearances

32 women, including wives of the Ogaden National Liberation Front Chairman, Mrs Geni Aafi, and Central Committee member Abdirisaaq Tiiba, Mrs Maryama, "were detained in an undisclosed location" and "their children were left unattended", Godey city, date unknown, reported March 1996 (24).

Imprisonments etc

According to a report received 5.5.96, over 600 Ogadeni people, including women, children and elderly civilians, have been detained and some of these have been tortured to death (24).

The parents of a male child in Qabridaharre were imprisoned when they complained about his being molested by Ethiopian government forces, reported March 1996 (24).

The following are named Ogadeni prisoners :-

Hussein Sh.Ahmed (Qarroof), elder, Addis Ababa, 15.2.96
Abdi Ismail (Ganaf), MP, Addis Ababa, 15.2.96
Mrs Asha Geelqaad, housewife, Godey, 13.1.96
Dhubad Sulub (Qaxod), farmer, Godey, 13.1.96
Mrs Seynab Aw-Ahmed, trader, Godey, 13.1.96
Mr Abdiweli, shopkeeper, Godey, 15.2.96
Abdullahi Abdi-Ba'aad, agronomist, Godey, 15.2.96
Abdulqadir Adde, businessman, Godey, 15.2.96
Mr Afluug, elder, Godey, 15.2.96
Bishar Mohamed, shopkeeper, Godey, 15.2.96
Duale Arte, shopkeeper, Godey, 15.2.96
Shukri Arte, businessman, Godey, 15.2.96
Ga'ma-dhiig Omar, trader, Godey, 15.2.96
Hussein Qasim, shopkeeper, Godey, 15.2.96
Miyir Sigale, elder, Godey, 15.2.96
Moallim Abdullahi, teacher, Godey, 15.2.96
Mohamed Hudle, shopkeeper, Godey, 15.2.96
Mohamed Sirad, technician, Godey, 15.2.96
Mrs Adar Farah, housewife, Godey, 15.2.96
Mrs Udgoon, housewife, Godey, 15.2.96
Sheik Abdi Hajir, elder, Godey, 15.2.96
Sheik Osman, elder, Godey, 15.2.96
Mrs Anbaro Ahmed Omar, trader, Qabridaharre, 15.1.96
Abdullahi Y.Dool, elder, Qabridaharre, 15.1.96
Mrs Bisharo Waedi Shaqlane, trader, Qabridaharre, 15.1.96

Mrs Maryama Sh.Hussein, trader, Qabridaharre, 15.1.96
Moallim Ilyaas, teacher, Qabridaharre, 15.1.96
Ahmed Haadi Rabaax, elder, Qabridaharre, 15.1.96
Mrs Diiran Ahmed, nurse, Qabridaharre, 25.12.95
Mrs Muxubo Aw-Ali, shopkeeper, Shilabo, 10.1.96
Sheik Mohamed Idle, elder, Wardheer, 15.2.96
Sheik Muse, elder, Wardheer, 15.2.96 (24).

The following Ogaden National Liberation Front members (three are fathers of members) have had property looted and suffered mistreatment at the hands of government forces :-

Ibrahim Abdalla Mohamed, ONLF Chairperson, Godey, 1.11.95
Ahmed Ali Deeq, Central Committee, Godey, 1.11.95
Ibrahim Abdi Hassan, Godey, 1.11.95
Ahmed Mohamed Omar, Executive Committee, Qorile, 1.11.95
Adan Yusuf Tani, Wardheer, 1.11.95
Ibrahim Hussein Malow, Aado, 1.11.95
Hassan Aw-Isse, Dhgaxbur, 20.11.95
Abdulahi Haliye, Dhgaxbur, 20.11.95
Muhumed Aydiid, Dhgaxbur, 20.11.95
Ugas Abdirizaq, Executive Committee, Dhgaxbur, 20.11.95
Deeq Abdi Rasin, Central Committee, Qabridaharre, 1.11.95
Muhumed A/le Shilis, Wardheer, 1.11.95
Dhego-Weyne, Wardheer, 1.11.95. (24).

SHEKACHO

The Shekacho people has a population of about one million, of whom only 25% are male, due to forced conscription and killings performed by successive Ethiopian regimes. They live in the Kaffa province of Ethiopia and have a language which is shared by the Kafficho people of the same province. Only 0.2% of the Shekacho have received any education and only 5% read and speak Amharic. Thus their voice is seldom heard.

In 1984 tropical rainforest covered 78% of Kaffa province. It now covers only 40%. "The Shekacho region has been reduced to a lawless, poverty stricken wasteland." Even bridges, including one built by the Italians in 1937, have been dismantled and taken to Tigray.

Initially, with the Kafficho, they were represented by the Kaffa Peoples' Democratic Union Party (KPDU), in the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. Although a KPDU office remains open in Addis Ababa, its members in Kaffa have been imprisoned.

Very little information about atrocities committed by EPRDF forces against the Shekacho reaches the outside world. Some incidents were reported in the OSG August 1995 press release. Incidents not previously recorded by OSG are :-

Killing :-

Birhanu Gebo

Imprisoned and tortured :-

Grima Haile Michael, teacher
Mamo Wolasha, 45 yr old businessman
Kebede Tereda, 35
Ambelo Desseno, 41
Azage Ambelo, 55
Tekaligne Assress, 17
Mrs Shashitu Mekuria (see below)

Tamiru Mittaw
Tadesse Shajo
Assress Deyno

(25).

These are but a small fraction of the human rights violations against the Shekacho people.

The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) (30) also reports the **imprisonment** of Haile Belachew, teacher, 14.11.95, in Getcha town, 35km away from his home in Masha town.

His daughter, 19 yr old Shewaye Haile, a student, has had to abandon her studies because her hands are paralysed following being **tortured** by Shekacho police. Her hands were damaged by the application of steel rodded screwable handcuffs. This seems to be a specialty of the Shekacho police as this was the means of torturing Judge Sheno's wife, Ametemariam Garefo (see February press release).

EHRCO reports the same **torture** method being used on the following people in Shekacho:-

Mrs Elfinesh Tumo, housewife
Mrs Shashitu Mekuria, housewife
Mrs Ayelech Tereda, tej (local beer) trader
Mrs Tewabech Shebeno, tej trader
Mrs Fellekech Gudeta, housewife
Mrs Birke Shello, housewife
Mrs Assegedech Gebo, housewife
Mesfin Megalo, tailor
Adraro Angello, trader
Denbel Toqo, farmer
Ambaw Maderasho,
Mellese Megalo, tailor
Tsfaye Negash, public health officer

CIVIL SERVANTS DISMISSED

Edossa Chemeda, Director of the Teachers Training Institute in Nekemte, Wollega, was accused of being an OLF member and dismissed in early September 1995, after 21 yrs service, 13 as director.

Jembere Kedida, teacher had been dismissed after 14 yrs service, on 30.10.94. (26).

The following dismissals were reported in March 1996 :-

Hussein Ambo, Head of Oromia Relief and Rehabilitation Office, Addis Ababa

Jaldo Gemeta, teacher in Bale

Worku Dachasa, Education officer

Alemayehu Guyassa, Head of Central Personnel Department, Oromia

Habinb Haji Kadir

Jemal Gudato and

Adam Kuri, (1).

Rashid Kadir, a graduate from the Management School of Addis Ababa University was dismissed from the Oromo Finance Bureau, Addis Ababa, in April/May. Most of the 71 sacked from the same department were Oromo (27).

Mama Hussein, a graduate from the Accounting Dept. of Asmara University was dismissed from Adama Finance Office in April/May (27).

In W. Wollega, 43 local government officers were reported sacked in March 1996, 13 from the Dept. of Agriculture, 10 from Dept. of Education, 6 from Urban Planning and Administration, 5 from Dept. of Health and 9 from Relief Coordination (1).

OROMO MUSIC BANNED

Listening to Oromo music in rural areas has resulted in fines of up to 300 Birr (50 \$) (1).

PRESS

The Islamic newspaper "Nadjash" was reported in March 1996 to have been closed down (1).

In mid-April 1996 the Oromo newspaper "Seife Nebelbal" was closed down and three staff imprisoned. The editor, Tamirat Gameda, was taken from his residential area, 16.4.96, and discovered one week later at Maikelawi Special Branch for Investigation.

Mr Muse, of the newspaper's Public Relations Dept. was taken at Bole Printing Enterprise on 19.4.96, by plain clothes security men. He was beaten, stepped and spat on at the time of his abduction. The manuscript he was carrying was confiscated and he was released after four nights.

Israel Soboka, the newspaper's General Manager, was taken from his home on 19.4.96 and detained at Maikelawi for two weeks, being charged on four counts related to the press law. The detentions were without warrant or court order. (2, 10).

Solomon Namara, Chief Editor of "Urji" newspaper, remains in custody after being arrested on 30.4.96 (2).

The Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association were reported on 14.6.96 to have claimed that more than 150 Ethiopian journalists have been imprisoned in the last five years. Over 32 editors and publishers have been fined a total of 45,000 Birr. Journalists Getahun Bekele, Andargue Mesfin and Sissay Agena are serving 12-36 month sentences at the Central State Prison and two, Kumsa Burayu and Tsegaye Meskalu, have disappeared. (28).

The US-based Committee to Protect Journalists are reported in Spring 1996 to have stated "For the third consecutive year, Ethiopia held more journalists in jail - 31 at years end (1995) - than any other country in Africa. Most were detained without charges." (28).

JUDICIARY

"Many hundreds" of judges from Federal, Central, Zonal and Local Courts have been expelled, around the country, resulting in long delays in cases being heard. In April alone, 29 were dismissed from the Central High Court, and 60 from Zonal and Regional Courts. They are being replaced by political appointees recently graduated from government run "Civic Colleges". (2).

According to the Ethiopian Human Rights Council, delays in hearings in the Federal Courts have been compounded by the government's sloth in appointing judges and their refusal to allow appointees under the Transitional Charter to work until those appointed under the new constitution take over. Such restrictions are not being applied to the Dergue trials. (29).

Waabi Haji, a graduate from Addis Ababa University Law School, was dismissed as a judge in Harar Supreme Court in April/May and ordered to stay under strict security follow up. A previously active supporter of the Oromo student movement, he has been detained twice under the current regime. (27).

Mohamed Abba Metcha and Ashebir Wolde Tsadik, both judges of Ghimbo Woreda Court, Kafficho Zone, Kaffa, were abducted, by policemen under orders of the local administrative council, from the court on 5.10.95. They were searched. Keys to the court were confiscated and the court was sealed. Along with prosecutors Woldemariam Adlo and Ghebeyehu Gizaw, they were marched to Ghimbo Woreda Police Station and ~~jailed~~ overnight, where they were abused by prisoners whom they had previously sentenced. The prisoners urinated on them. They were subsequently dismissed from the bench. (30).

FORCED LABOUR IN TIGRAY?

Source 2. reports that many Oromo speaking labourers are engaged in the construction of Makale airport in Tigray. They are prevented from speaking to local Tigreans and it is suggested that they are ex-army personnel and prisoners.

ORA CLOSURE

The remaining office of the Oromo Relief Association, its head office in Addis Ababa, was closed by Addis Ababa police on 29.2.96. Property worth 12 million Birr (\$2 million) was seized (1). ORA took Region 14 (Addis Ababa) authorities to court on 10.4.96. These authorities blamed the closure of ORA in Ethiopia on the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. A second hearing, with the RRC present, was scheduled for 24.5.96 but the outcome of this is not known. The Executive Director of ORA was unable to be present because of an illness which may have resulted from poisoning (see below). (31, 32).

The imprisoned ORA staff from Negele, Borana, were released after officials based in Addis Ababa visited Negele. They are now in hiding in Addis Ababa as EPRDF forces tried again to arrest them. (32).

SUSPECTED POISONING OF DIRECTOR OF ORA AND CLOSURE OF "DOOR OF LIFE CLINIC"

Dr Addisu Beyene, Executive Director of the Oromo Relief Association, developed symptoms of gastro-intestinal bleeding and urinary retention after attending a function at the Hawii Hotel in Addis Ababa on 17.3.96. He had experienced no related symptoms before this.

The next day he was seen at the "Door of Life" (Hiot Ber) private clinic in Addis Ababa. It was fully licensed by the Ministry of Health and run by Oromo nationals. After emergency treatment he was recommended to be admitted to Yekatit Hospital. No bed was available and he became one of three in-patients at the "Door of Life" clinic on 19th March.

During that night, at 12.30am, the clinic was raided by about 50 heavily armed policemen and Dr Beyene was ordered from his bed by a policeman named Aransh, despite his having an indwelling urinary catheter and intravenous infusion in place. He was ordered to stand outside in the cold for two hours. During this time, the night staff, apart from the nurse in charge, and another Oromo patient (not the third patient, an Eritrean, who was allowed to stay in bed) were taken away by the police. Meeti Taye, a girl in her mid-teens, related to the other Oromo patient and helping to look after him, was beaten about the head and face by two policemen using a bottle. When she fell to the ground the police beat her with a stick. She was then taken away with the others.

The police looted clinic property, including medical equipment and the clinic license. Half of the police remained at the clinic and Dr Beyene was ordered back to bed. Next morning, after refusing entry to the day staff, policemen forced him out of bed and drove him to Police Station 7 in Merkato. They chose rough roads, which caused severe discomfort from the infusion needle which remained in situ. He was then taken, with the five staff arrested the previous night, crowded into the same vehicle, to the Central Criminal Investigation Bureau of Region 14 (ie Addis Ababa). After standing outside for about one hour, they were returned to the clinic.

At 4.15pm that afternoon (20th March) about 30 police came, ordered patients and staff to leave, and closed the clinic down. An ambulance was arranged for the Eritrean patient ; Dr Beyene took a taxi. The clinic remains closed. The other Oromo patient and a clinic guard remain in prison.

Dr Beyene finally managed to get to Germany, where he was hospitalised on arrival on April 7th. There he was treated for complicating infection. It was too late to identify his original illness. (1,11, 31, 32,).

Because of the lack of previous and subsequent symptoms, the coincident clinic closure and the mistreatment of Dr Beyene, it is not unreasonable to suspect that an attempt had been made to kill him. An informant of OSG stated that the clinic closure was witnessed by the head of the Human Rights Dept. of the US Embassy in Addis.