

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 04/03/96

22 October 1996

Further information on UA 211/96 (AFR 04/01/96, 23 August 1996) and follow-up (AFR 04/02/96, 17 September) - Fear for safety / Refoulement / "Disappearance"

ETHIOPIA / DJIBOUTI Girmay Moges Newaye-Mariam, aged 38

Muyhadin Muftah

Hussein Ahmed Aydrus (corrected name)

new names: Yusuf Hersi Ollow
Elmi Ahmed
Abdiqadir Dahir
Abdikarim Hussein Hassan

Ahmed Mohamed
Abdullahi Haliye
Abdullahi Qaji

Amnesty International has learned that Girmay Moges Newaye-Mariam, after being arrested in Djibouti on 17 August 1996 and forcibly returned to Ethiopia, was taken to court in Mekelle in Tigray region, northern Ethiopia, on different occasions in September and October 1996. He has not yet been charged with any offence or allowed access to his family or a lawyer. It is believed he is held because of his defection in 1981 from the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), whose leaders have been in power in Ethiopia since 1991.

Muyhadin Muftah, a leader of the Ethiopian opposition Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (ARDUF), who was arrested in Djibouti on 23 August and forcibly returned to Ethiopia, is reportedly detained secretly and incommunicado in Tigray region in Ethiopia.

Hussein Ahmed Aydrus (incorrectly named Aydrus Hussein in previous update) and several other members of the Ethiopian opposition Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), who were arrested in Djibouti on 1 September and forcibly returned to Ethiopia, are also still "disappeared" in custody somewhere in Ethiopia. They include Yusuf Hersi Ollow, Elmi Ahmed, Abdiqadir Dahir and Abdikarim Hussein Hassan.

In addition, three other ONLF members -- Ahmed Mohamed, Abdullahi Haliye and Abdullahi Qaji -- who were arrested on 17 August in Hargeisa in Somaliland (a self-declared republic, formerly northwest Somalia) were reportedly forcibly returned to Ethiopia on 20 October.

The Ethiopian authorities have not so far replied to the previous appeals in these cases. These deportations appear to indicate new moves in a regional security agreement affecting Ethiopian government opponents particularly.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in English (preferably in French to Djibouti) or your own language:

(A) To the Ethiopian authorities:

- asking for a public statement on the whereabouts of Muhyadin Muftah, Hussein Ahmed Aydrus, Ahmed Mohamed and the other Ethiopian Somalis named above who have "disappeared" since being handed over to the Ethiopian authorities by the Djibouti and Somaliland authorities;

- calling for them and Girmay Moges Newaye-Mariam to be treated humanely and given access to their families and legal counsel, and to be charged with recognizably criminal offences or else released.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Dr Negaso Gidada
President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
Office of the President
P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telegrams: President Negaso, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Faxes: +2511 552030
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Meles Zenawi
Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office
P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telegrams: Prime Minister Meles, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Faxes: +2511 552030
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Mahteme Solomon
Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice
P O Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Faxes: +2511 550722
Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Ethiopia accredited to your country.

(B) To the Djibouti authorities:

- expressing further concern that Girmay Moges Newaye-Mariam, Muhyadin Muftah, Hussein Ahmed Aydrus and several other Ethiopian Somalis, all opponents of the Ethiopian government, were detained in Djibouti and handed over to the Ethiopian authorities against their will and without any court process or reference to the Office of the UN High Commissioner of Refugees;
- asking them to obtain assurances of their safety and respect for their human and legal rights from the Ethiopian authorities;
- calling for the Djibouti government to give a public commitment to respect the principle of non-refoulement in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Hassan Gouled Aptidon
President of the Republic of Djibouti
BP 6, Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti
Fax: +253 355049
Telegrams: President, Djibouti, Djibouti
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Executive Secretary, Office of National Assistance to Refugees (ONARS)
BP 55, Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti

and diplomatic representatives of Djibouti accredited to your country.

(C) If possible, also send appeals to the President of Somaliland, no more than 10 appeals per section. Faxes only (no postal service).

- expressing concern at reports that Ahmed Mohamed, Abdullahi Haliye and Abdullahi Qaji, opponents of the Ethiopian government, who had been detained in Hargeisa since 17 August, were handed over to the Ethiopian authorities on 20 October against their will and without any court process or reference to the Office of the UN High Commissioner of Refugees;
- asking them, if these reports are true, to obtain assurances from the Ethiopian authorities of the safety of those deported and respect for their human and legal rights;
- calling for the Somaliland authorities to give a public commitment to respect the principle of non-refoulement in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

His Excellency Mohamed Ibrahim Egal
President of Somaliland, Office of the President, Hargeisa, Somaliland
Fax: +252 213 4513
Salutation: Your Excellency

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 December 1996.