

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 25/03/97

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 25 per Section.

UA 49/97

Medical concern / Torture

11 February 1997

ETHIOPIA Mahmoud Ali Said (known as "Saïdo"), aged 45, farmer

Mahmoud Ali Said ("Saïdo") is seriously ill in prison in Dire Dawa town in eastern Ethiopia, as a result of denial of medical treatment for injuries sustained as a result of torture. He is a farmer and owner of a tea-shop in the nearby small town of Burka Tirtira, and is married with 11 children.

Mahmoud Ali Said "disappeared" in May 1995 in Dire Dawa after being abducted in Burka Tirtira by unidentified security agents. In January 1997, after 20 months in secret detention he was transferred to the central prison in Dire Dawa. He has never been taken to court or charged with any offence.

He is reportedly seriously ill with hepatitis and gastritis, and wounds from torture inflicted while in secret detention. He is said to be unable to stand or walk. For the whole time in secret detention, he was denied medical treatment.

Mahmoud Ali Said was evidently detained on suspicion of having links with the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), which is in armed opposition to the government in Oromia Region (Region Four). He belongs to the Oromo nationality (or ethnic group) and was detained without trial for eight years up to 1991 under the former Dergue government on similar grounds. He has reportedly denied providing material support to OLF guerrilla forces fighting the new government since 1992.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There have been reports in the past three or more years of numerous detentions, torture and extrajudicial executions of unarmed civilians in this and other parts of Oromia Region who were suspected of links with OLF groups fighting government forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern that Mahmoud Ali Said ("Saïdo") is seriously ill as a result of torture injuries and denial of medical treatment during 20 months of secret detention;
- appealing for him to be given urgent medical treatment and admission to hospital, and regular access to his family;
- expressing concern that he has been detained secretly and unlawfully for over 20 months without charge and trial, and calling for his release if there is no evidence to charge him with a recognizable criminal offence;
- calling for full and impartial investigation into his torture, and for anyone found responsible to be brought to justice.

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

Mr Kuma Demeksa
President of Oromia
Oromia Regional State Council
P O Box 62298, Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Telegrams: President of Oromia, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Salutation: Dear President

COPIES TO:

- Mr Kifle Gebre-Medhin, General Manager
Security, Immigration and Refugee Affairs Authority,
c/o Office of the Prime Minister,
P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, **Fax: +2511 552030**
- Mr Kemal Bedri, Chief Justice, Supreme Court, P O Box 6166, Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia, **Fax: +2511 550278**
- Mr Seyoum Mesfin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
P O Box 393, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, **Fax: +2511 514300**

and to diplomatic representatives of Ethiopia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 March 1997.