

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 25/021/2002

UA 252/02

Torture/Fear for safety/  
Incommunicado detention/

12 August 2002

ETHIOPIA

Ziad Hussein Abarusky (m)  
Four others (names unknown)

---

Ziad Hussein Abarusky and four others were arrested at the end of June in Dire Dawa city in Oromia region, eastern Ethiopia. They are being held incommunicado in Memria prison on the outskirts of Dire Dawa.

Ziad Hussein Abarusky has reportedly been subjected to severe torture, including to his sexual organs, that left him unable to walk. He has been refused medical attention. The authorities have not allowed his family to visit him, although his family have been permitted to take food for him to the prison.

All five detainees are employees of the Ethiopia-Djibouti Railway at Dire Dawa. Ziad Hussein Abarusky has been working there for over 15 years. One of the other detainees is a senior official of the railway. They are all ethnic Oromos.

Ziad Hussein Abarusky, a father of seven, is a well-known former Ethiopian national football player, and an assistant coach of the Under-20s national team that participated in the Under 20s World Cup in Argentina in 2001. He is currently the head coach of a premier league football team called Babur in Dire-Dawa.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

These arrests follow a bomb attack at the Dire Dawa railway office building on 24 June, for which the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) claimed responsibility. Though there were no casualties the bomb blast damaged one of the rooms in the building and a train compartment.

The OLF has been fighting government forces in Oromia since it left the Ethiopian government coalition in 1992. Thousands of members of the Oromo ethnic group have been detained without charge or trial for several years on suspicion of involvement with the OLF. There are frequent reports of OLF suspects and anti-government demonstrators being ill-treated or tortured in custody.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Amharic, English or in your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Ziad Hussein Abarusky and four other detainees, who were arrested in the days following the bomb blast at the Dire Dawa railway station on 24 June;
  - calling on the authorities to investigate allegations of torture and ill treatment of Ziad Hussein Abarusky and his fellow detainees;
  - calling on the authorities to allow Ziad Hussein Abarusky and the other detainees immediate access to medical treatment and access to an appropriate international humanitarian organization such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);
  - calling for the detainees to be granted access to their families and legal representatives;
- urging the authorities to either charge the detainees with a recognizable criminal offence and give them a prompt and fair trial, or release them immediately.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Meles Zenawi  
Prime Minister  
Prime Minister's Office  
P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Telegrams: Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**  
**Fax: + 251 1 552 020 (this number may be difficult to get through to**  
**but please keep trying)**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Major Befkadu Tolera  
Federal Commissioner of Police  
Ministry of Justice  
P O Box 21321, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
**Telegrams: Federal Commissioner of Police, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**  
**Fax: + 251 1 517 775**  
**Salutation: Dear Commissioner**

Mr Juneidin Sado  
President of Oromia Region  
Oromia Regional State Council  
P O Box 62297, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
**Telegram: Oromia President Juneidin Sado, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**  
**Salutation: Dear Regional President**

**COPIES TO:**

Mr Getachew Assefa  
General Manager of Public Security  
Prime Minister's Office  
P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
**Fax: + 251 1 552 020 (this number may be difficult to get through to**  
**but please keep trying)**  
**Salutation: Dear Sir**

Mr Harke Haroye  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
P O Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
**Telegram: Minister of Justice, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**  
**Fax: + 251 1 517 775**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

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 23 September 2002.