

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 25/23/97

28 November 1997

Further information on UA 330/97 (AFR 25/17/97, 23 October 1997) and follow-up (AFR 25/18/97, 30 October) - Fear for safety / Prisoners of conscience

**ETHIOPIA** Solomon Namara, journalist

Tesfaye Deressa, journalist

Garoma Bekele, former journalist, human rights activist

Garoma Bekele, who was arrested at his Human Rights League office on 27 October 1997, has now been taken to court but has not so far been charged with any offence. As he had left the newspaper *Urji* ("The Star") several months ago, it now seems that he was arrested because of his present work for the past several months as secretary general of the Human Rights League.

Seven founding members of the Human Rights League were arrested on 6 November and are still detained without charge or trial for allegedly giving support to the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). Amnesty International believes they are prisoners of conscience imprisoned because of their human rights activities and is appealing for their immediate and unconditional release. [See UA EXTRA 153/97 (AFR 25/19/97, 6 November, and updates AFR 25/20/97, 11 November and AFR 25/22/97, 27 November, and News Statement AFR 25/21/97, 27 November.]

Solomon Namara and Tesfaye Deressa have not so far been charged but are still detained, reportedly in connection with a newspaper article in *Urji* questioning the official account of the police killing of three suspected OLF members and whether they may have been extrajudicially executed.

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

- expressing concern about the continuing detentions of Solomon Namara, Tesfaye Deressa and Garoma Bekele;
- urging that all three be given regular access in custody to their families, legal representatives and medical doctors;
- calling for their immediate and unconditional release as prisoners of conscience imprisoned on account of their professional journalistic work (Solomon Namara and Tesfaye Deressa) or their human rights activities (Garoma Bekele).

**APPEALS TO:**

His Excellency Meles Zenawi  
Prime Minister  
Prime Minister's Office  
P O Box 1031

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Faxes: +2511 552030**

**Telegrams: Prime Minister Meles, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Mr Werede-Wold Wolde (*note corrected name*)

Minister of Justice

Ministry of Justice

P O Box 1370

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Faxes: +2511 550278** (*note amended fax number*)

**Telegrams: Justice Minister, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Colonel Legesse Tegegne  
Commissioner of Police  
Ministry of Justice  
P O Box 1370  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Faxes: +2511 550278** (*note amended fax number*)

**Telegrams: Police Commissioner, Justice Ministry, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**  
**Salutation: Dear Colonel**

**COPIES TO:**

- His Excellency President Negasso Gidada, Office of the President, 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**
- Mr Wolde-Michael Chemmu, Minister of Information, Ministry of Information, P O Box 1364, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Human Rights League, P O Box 20600, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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 15 January 1998.