

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 01/93 Possible Extrajudicial Executions/ 5 January 1993
Legal Concern

ETHIOPIA: Student demonstrators in Addis Ababa

Amnesty International is concerned at the killing of peaceful demonstrators by members of the Ethiopian security forces in Addis Ababa on 4 January 1993. During a demonstration by over one thousand students of Addis Ababa University, the Ethiopian security forces reportedly shot dead at least seven students and wounded over 100 others, two of whom are said to have subsequently died in hospital.

The student union organizers had been refused a permit to demonstrate and the authorities had declared the demonstration illegal. The security forces reportedly opened fire without warning, although the demonstration had been peaceful. Students were beaten, wounded or shot, both inside the campus and outside on the street. The security forces refused to allow ambulances to take the wounded to hospital for over an hour after the shootings.

Scores of students were also arrested and held incommunicado. Government officials later claimed that only one person had been killed and 13 wounded. The identities of those killed and those detained are not yet known to Amnesty International.

BACKGROUND

The demonstrators were protesting at the United Nations' involvement as observers in an independence referendum in Eritrea which is due to be held in April 1993. They had planned to march from the university to the UN centre in Addis Ababa to deliver a petition to the UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, who was visiting Addis Ababa for peace talks between political leaders from Somalia and was subsequently to visit Eritrea for talks with the government there. The demonstrators were opposed to Eritrea becoming independent from Ethiopia, although it has been administered separately since May 1991, with the agreement of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. After 30 years of fighting for independence, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) took power in Eritrea by defeating former President Mengistu Haile-Mariam's army, and established the Provisional Government of Eritrea.

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

- expressing concern that at least seven students were reportedly shot dead and over 100 wounded in a peaceful demonstration held in Addis Ababa on 4 January 1993;

- calling for an impartial inquiry into the use of firearms and lethal force by the security forces against peaceful demonstrators, in contravention of the UN's Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (adopted

by the 8th UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders on 7 September 1990);

- expressing concern at the detention of some of the demonstrators and urging that they be humanely treated and given immediate access to relatives and lawyers; also that they be released without delay if they are being detained solely for peacefully exercising their basic rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly.

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APPEALS TO

1) His Excellency President Meles Zenawi
Office of the President
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telegrams: President Meles Zenawi, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telexes: 21050 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Faxes: + 251 1 514300 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Mr Tamrat Layne
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telegrams: Prime Minister Tamrat Layne, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telexes: 21050 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Faxes: + 251 1 514300 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

3) Mr Meheteme Solomon
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
P O Box 1370
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telegrams: Minister of Justice Meheteme Solomon, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telexes: 21050 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Faxes: + 251 1 514300 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Minister

4) Mr Kuma Demeksa
Minister of Internal Affairs
Ministry of Internal Affairs
P O Box 2556
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telegrams: Minister of Internal Affairs Kuma Demeksa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Telexes: 21050 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Faxes: + 251 1 514300 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Mr Seyoum Mesfin

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P O Box 393
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Faxes: + 251 1 514300

2) Mr Hassen Shifa
Head of Police and Prison Administration
Ministry of Internal Affairs
P O Box 2556
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 16 February 1993.