

PUBLIC

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31 May 2007

Further Information on UA 88/07 (AFR 25/002/2007, 16 April 2007) and follow-up (AFR 25/009/2007, 04 May 2007) – Incommunicado detention/Fear of torture or ill-treatment/health concern

ETHIOPIA **Bashir Ahmed Makhtal (m), Canadian national**
Ayub Abdurazak (m), French resident
Tesfaldet Kidane Tesfasgi (m), Eritrean national, television cameraman
Saleh Idris Salim (m), Eritrean national, television journalist
Sophia Abdi Nasir (f), Swedish national
Abdi Muhammed Abdillahi (m), Kenyan national
And up to 55 other men, women and children of various nationalities

Released: **Halima Badrudine Hussein (f), Comorian national, and her three children**
Ines Chine (f), Tunisian national
Adnan Najah (m), her husband
Osman Ahmed Yassin (m), Swedish national
Two other Swedish nationals
Seven others

Three groups of people who had been detained in Kenya and transferred to Ethiopia via Somalia without legal recourse have recently been released by the Ethiopian authorities.

Halima Badrudine Hussein, her three children and seven other individuals were recently released by the Ethiopian government. Halima Badrudine Hussein is the wife of Fazul Abdallah, who is wanted by the USA in connection with the 1998 US embassy bombings in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, and the Tanzanian capital, Dar-es-Salaam. On 7 January 2007, Halima Badrudine Hussein was arrested with her three children, aged 15, 11 and four. Halima Badrudine Hussein is apparently not suspected of involvement in the bombings. She was released on 4 May with her children, and has been returned to the Comoros.

This follows the release of Ines Chine on 10 May, along with her husband Adnan Najah. Both are Tunisian nationals, and have fled to Egypt where they are attempting to claim asylum, fearing arrest and mistreatment if they return to Tunisia. Ines Chine, who was pregnant when she was arrested on 21 January 2007, has since given birth to a baby boy.

Three more Swedish men held by Ethiopia were reportedly released and returned to Sweden. The Foreign Minister of Sweden made a statement thanking Swedish officials who had worked to ensure their release. This follows a 17-year-old Swedish girl being released by Ethiopian government in late March.

There are still up to 55 people being detained in Ethiopia after being transferred from Kenya via Somalia, transferred in secret without legal recourse. The Ethiopian government has only acknowledged 41 detainees, which include the 22 people whom it has released. Four UK citizens who were also detained by the Kenyan authorities were sent back to the UK from Somalia on 14 February 2007. There is no further news on Canadian national Bashir Ahmed Makhtal, who is still thought to be detained incommunicado at the police Central Investigation Bureau (known as Maikelawi) in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has been reported in the media responding to UA 88/07 saying, "Those who have been released have clearly stated they were not mistreated." The Ethiopian government has been quoted as saying that of the 41 people whom it acknowledges detaining, 12 were being kept in jail

while the rest had been or were being released. The Prime Minister been quoted as comparing the 12 to "a United Nations of Islamists."

The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also published a letter in response to the UA, available at http://www.mfa.gov.et/Press_Section/Newsletter.php?Page=Press_Statements/Report_UA.htm

Amnesty International has issued a focus sheet, *Horn of Africa: unlawful transfers in the 'war on terror'* (AFR 25/006/2007, June 2007). It is available at [http://web.amnesty.org/library/pdf/AFR250062007ENGLISH/\\$File/AFR2500607.pdf](http://web.amnesty.org/library/pdf/AFR250062007ENGLISH/$File/AFR2500607.pdf)

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

- acknowledging the release of Halima Badrouline Hussein and her three children, Ines Chine and her husband, and a number of others;
- expressing concern at reports that Bashir Ahmed Maktal, Tesfaldet Kidane Tesfasgi and Saleh Idris Salim, who were arrested while trying to cross from Somalia into Kenya and later transferred to Ethiopia, are among up to 55 people still detained without charge or trial;
- urging the authorities to grant the detainees immediate access to their lawyers and families, and to guarantee that they are not tortured or ill-treated in detention;
- calling on the authorities to release all the detainees immediately if they are not to be charged with recognizably criminal offences.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister

His Excellency Meles Zenawi, Office of the Prime Minister, PO Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 1552020

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Mr Seyoum Mesfin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PO Box 393, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 551 43 00

Email: mfa.addis@telecom.net.et

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Minister of Justice

Mr Assefa Kesito, Ministry of Justice, PO Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 5517775 / 5520874

Email: ministry-justice@telecom.net.et

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 13 July 2007.