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Amnesty experts available for interview in reaction to death of Ethiopian prime Minister

In reaction to the death of Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, Amnesty International's Ethiopia researcher Claire Beston said:

“The 21 years of Meles Zenawi's rule were characterized by ever-increasing repression and widespread human rights violations. His government stamped out dissenting voices, dismantled the independent media, obstructed human rights organisations and strangled political opposition.

“Ethiopia's jails are packed to the seams with suspected political opponents - from urban intellectuals to rural farmers. Torture and ill-treatment are commonplace. State resources, assistance and opportunities have been broadly used to control the population. Tens of thousands of Ethiopians were forced to flee the country during his rule.

“The succession of Meles Zenawi represents a significant opportunity which the government and the next Prime Minister must use to change the course of the country, to usher in an era of greater respect for the rights of all Ethiopians.”

For further information or to arrange an interview please call the Amnesty International Press Office on +44 (0)207 413 5729 or email katy.pownall@amnesty.org