

**ETHIOPIA** **Kebede Mammo (m), school director**  
**Abebe Chimde (m), aged 46 ]**  
**Mosissa Futasa (m), aged 50 ]**  
**Kebede Humnasa (m), aged 33 ] teachers**  
**Dinsa Serbessa (m), aged 53]**  
**Tesfaye Taressa (m), aged 39]**

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The people named above, all teachers from Basha Aboye secondary school in Gudar, Oromia Region, were arrested in Gudar on 5 July. They are reportedly being held incommunicado without charge or trial in the Ambo Palace prison in nearby Ambo town, where they are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Many teachers are among people detained in a continuing pattern of mass arrests in Oromia Region, following demonstrations by school students in late March and April. Hundreds of people earlier arrested after a demonstration in Ambo on 24 March, where student Girma Beyene was shot dead, are still reportedly detained in the Ambo Palace prison in harsh, overcrowded conditions.

The government alleged that the demonstrations were organized by the armed opposition Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), which is active in parts of western and eastern Oromia Region. It accused the demonstrators and others, including teachers, of supporting the OLF. Hundreds of Oromos have been detained by the security forces on suspicion of being OLF supporters, and many have allegedly been tortured. Others may have "disappeared", or could be detained for long periods without charge or trial.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Demonstrations by school students in several towns in western Ethiopia in Oromia Region in late March and April started peacefully but were met with shooting by the security forces, in which at least ten people were shot dead. Demonstrators were protesting at government policies on education, taxation and agricultural services. The security forces arrested several hundred student demonstrators (including several under 18 years old) and suspected OLF supporters. None has so far been charged with a recognizable criminal offence or brought to trial.

Hundreds of those arrested after the student demonstrations in Oromia are the subject of a separate Urgent Action appeal (UA 101/02, 3 April 2002, AFR 25/010/2002, and follow-ups of 19 April 2002 (AFR 25/014/2002) and 21 June 2002 (AFR 25/016/2002).

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

- expressing concern for the safety of the six teachers from Gudar, who were arrested on 5 July in continuing large-scale arrests connected to the student demonstrations in Oromia region;
- calling for guarantees that these and hundreds of other detainees reportedly held in the Ambo Palace prison are not at risk of torture;
- urging the authorities to grant all detainees immediate access to their families and legal representatives, any medical treatment they may need, and access to an appropriate international humanitarian organization such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);

- urging that they should be either charged with a recognizable criminal offence and given a prompt and fair trial, or released.

**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 (it may be difficult to get through to this number, 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

**Telegrams: 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 (it may be difficult to get through to this number, but please keep trying)**

**Salutation:Dear Sir**

Mr Harke Haroye  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
P O Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Telegrams: 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 20 August 2002.