

URGENT ACTION

ETHIOPIAN ACTIVIST AT RISK OF TORTURE

Andargachew Tsige, an Ethiopian political activist in exile, appears to have been arrested in transit in Yemen on 24 June and forcibly returned to Ethiopia. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Andargachew Tsige is a British national of Ethiopian origin and Secretary-General of Ginbot 7, an outlawed Ethiopian opposition group. He disappeared on 24 June at Sana'a airport in Yemen, while in transit between the United Arab Emirates and Eritrea. Although no official statements have been released by the Yemeni or Ethiopian authorities about his current whereabouts, human rights activists in Yemen told Amnesty International that he was forcibly returned to Ethiopia the same day he landed after being detained at the Sana'a airport.

He is at high risk of torture and other ill-treatment in Ethiopia, where political detainees are frequently tortured in order to extract information and confessions. His incommunicado detention in an unknown location increases this risk.

Ginbot 7 is one of five organisations proscribed as terrorist organisations by the Ethiopian parliament in 2011. In 2012, Andargachew Tsige was prosecuted in absentia on terrorism charges (alongside journalist and prisoner of conscience Eskinder Nega, and others) and sentenced to life imprisonment. Previously, in 2009, he was convicted in absentia on charges related to an aborted coup attempt and was sentenced to death. He was also tried in absentia in the 2005-2007 trial of political opposition members, journalists, activists and others.

In recent years, many Ethiopians wanted by the authorities on the grounds of their political activities have been kidnapped in neighbouring countries and forcibly returned to Ethiopia. This has often involved the collaboration of security forces in those countries. Another of the defendants in the 2012 trial had been kidnapped and forcibly returned from Sudan. All those returned are at risk of arbitrary detention, torture and unfair trial.

Please write immediately in Amharic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to guarantee Andargachew Tsige is not subjected to torture or other forms of ill-treatment;
- Calling on the authorities to immediately provide information on the location where he is being held, and to ensure that he has full and immediate access to legal and consular representation and family members;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure that Andargachew Tsige is not required to serve any sentence for a conviction in absentia and must be retried on any charges against him in a trial that meets international standards, before a new court and without the possibility of the death penalty.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 AUGUST 2014 TO:

Minister of Justice

Getachew Ambaye
Ministry of Justice,
PO Box 1370,
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 5517755

Salutation: Dear Minister

Minister of Federal Affairs

D. Shiferaw Teklemariam
Ministry of Federal Affairs
P.O.Box 5718
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Email: shiferawtmm@yahoo.com

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Prime Minister

His Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn
Office of the Prime Minister,
PO Box 1031,
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 552030 (keep trying)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Andargachew Tsige is a former member of the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) party and was Deputy Mayor of Addis Ababa from 1991 to 1994, when he resigned on account of differences with the government.

Based in the UK, he travelled to Ethiopia shortly before the 2005 elections to support the opposition party Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD). On 8 June 2005, in the wake of the controversial election results, he was detained in Ethiopia and held at Ziway army camp. He was released on bail in July of that year. Like many detainees, Andargachew was accused of organizing the demonstrations, seeking to subvert the Constitution and other offences, which he denied, but he was not formally charged with any offence. After he was released he returned to the UK, but was subsequently named, tried and convicted in absentia in a major political trial of the leadership of the CUD, journalists, human rights activists and others, on charges including high treason, in 2005-2007. At the time he was the CUD representative in the UK.

After the CUD trial, fellow defendant Berhanu Nega founded the 'Ginbot 7 Movement for Justice, Freedom and Democracy' from exile in the US, of which Andargachew Tsige became Secretary General. Berhanu Nega was also tried in absentia in the 2009 and 2012 trials.

Name: Andargachew Tsige

Gender m/f: M

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