

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 25/12/97

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 25 per Section.

EXTRA 91/97 Fear of imprisonment as POC / Fear of ill-treatment 25 June 1997

ETHIOPIASvetlana Mamedova (f), aged 44, music teacher

Svetlana Mamedova, a naturalized Ethiopian citizen of Georgian origin, could face indefinite detention without charge or trial and ill-treatment in Ethiopia if she returns there from the United Kingdom (UK). She was temporarily admitted to the UK on 12 June 1997 after deportation from Ethiopia, where she had been detained for 14 months.

Svetlana Mamedova wishes to return to Ethiopia as soon as possible but the authorities have said they will detain her again if she does. Amnesty International believes that she would be a prisoner of conscience imprisoned because she has complained about her previous imprisonment and ill-treatment in police custody. If imprisoned, she could face ill-treatment in reprisal for these complaints against the authorities.

She is ill as a result of the harsh conditions of her previous detention, when she was not allowed visits by her son, his wife or their child, or access to her lawyer. She was ill-treated on several occasions for protesting her imprisonment -- she was beaten, chained tightly by hands and feet for three weeks on one occasion, and frequently denied medical treatment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Svetlana Mamedova went to Ethiopia in the late 1970s after marrying an Ethiopian student. She taught music and founded her own music school. Her problems with the authorities began in 1991 when they contested her Ethiopian citizenship and her purchase of vehicles and other property from the former Soviet Union military mission. She provided documentation about her citizenship and the purchased property, but was detained without charge or explanation in September 1991.

Since 1991 Svetlana Mamedova has been deported four times to a country not of her choice, and each time has been returned to Ethiopia or has returned voluntarily, and been detained again on her return. These periods of detention without charge in Addis Ababa now total nearly three years since 1991. Court orders for her release were rejected by the police.

She is seeking return of her property, which has been appropriated by the Ethiopian government and some of it by her ex-husband. Her case has recently received widespread publicity.

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

- appealing for Svetlana Mamedova to be allowed back into Ethiopia, where she is a naturalized citizen, without being arbitrarily detained;
- expressing concern at her previous arbitrary detention without charge or trial for a total of nearly three years, despite court orders for her release, and at her arbitrary deportations;
- calling for an independent inquiry into her allegations of ill-treatment in police custody.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Meles Zenawi
Prime Minister
Prime Minister's Office
P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Faxes: +2511 552030

Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr Seyoum Mesfin
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P O Box 393, Addis Ababa
Ethiopia,

Telegrams: Foreign Minister, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Faxes: +2511 514300

Salutation: Dear Minister

Colonel Legesse Tegegne
Commissioner of Police
Ministry of Justice
P O Box 1370
Addis Ababa

Telegrams: Police Commissioner, Justice Ministry, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Fax: +2511 550722

Salutation: Dear Commissioner

COPIES TO:

- Mr Kinfu Gebre-Medhin, General Manager - Public Security, c/o Office of the Prime Minister, P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, **Fax: +2511 552030**
- Mr Kemal Bedri, Chief Justice, Supreme Court, P O Box 6166, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, **Fax: +2511 550278**
- Mr Mahteme Solomon, Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, P O Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, **Fax: +2511 550722**

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 25 July 1997.