

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 25/015/2001

14 June 2001

Further information on UA 99/01 (AFR 25/006/2001, 18 April 2001) and follow-ups (AFR 25/007/2001, 20 April 2001; AFR 25/008/2001, 27 April 2001; AFR 25/010/2001, 10 May 2001) - Fear for safety / Use of excessive force by security forces

ETHIOPIA Students at Addis Ababa University

Civilian demonstrators in Addis Ababa, including students from secondary schools

Lidetu Ayalew, EDP Secretary General

Tamerat Tarakegn, EDP Central Committee member

Tadiwos Tantu, EDP Central Committee member

New names: Over 100 other EDP members

26 members of the All Amhara People's Organisation (note new figure)

Five members of the Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) were released on bail on 8 June, but more than 100 other EDP members are still detained incommunicado. Scores of students are reportedly still in custody, who have been detained incommunicado since the riots in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 April. All are feared to be at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Lidetu Ayalew, Tamerat Tarakegn, Tadiwos Tantu, Tekile Yeshaw and Mushe Semu from the EDP had spent over seven weeks detained incommunicado. They were released after the EDP filed *habeas corpus* petitions, and have not been charged.

Twenty-six members of the All Amhara People's Organisation, who had been held incommunicado for over a month, have now been located in Shewa Robit and Ziway prisons. Last week they were allowed to see their families, but have been denied access to their lawyers. They are held in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, and many are reported to be ill as a result.

The government is still accusing the EDP, AAPO and Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) of inciting and organizing the violence. Two EHRCO members, Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam and Dr Berhanu Nega, have been charged with "organising themselves under an underground political party...with the view to changing the constitution through illegal means" and "incitement to violence". They were released on bail on 5 June, after almost a month in custody. (See UA 116/01, AFR 25/011/2001, 10 May 2001 and follow-ups).

It is not clear whether the investigation called for by parliament into the violence in Addis Ababa in mid-April has yet begun. However, it is reported that on 7 June, during the presentation of a report on police performance over the past two-and-a-half years, a Federal Police Commission representative admitted to parliament that "excessive force was used in some respects by police in dealing with the recent student unrest". He went on to say that "mishaps had indeed occurred despite appropriate orientation to the cops prior to their assignment", according to Ethiopian newspapers. According to the Ethiopian press the police also admitted that "the lack of rules and regulations that govern the activities and the code of conduct of the police had created problems during the riots".

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

- expressing serious concern that over 100 opposition party members and scores of students are still detained incommunicado, and urging the authorities to reveal where they are being held, and why;
- calling on the authorities to allow all those still in custody immediate access to lawyers of their own choice, their families, and adequate medical care;
- urging them to guarantee that none of those detained will be tortured or ill-treated;
- calling on the authorities to either charge those still detained with a recognizably criminal offence, or to release them;
- welcoming the fact that police reportedly recognize that they used excessive force during the violence in Addis Ababa on 17-18 April and asking for copies of the police report presented to parliament on 7 June;
- urging that police carry out all of their work in accordance with international standards, particularly the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials;
- noting that the National Assembly has called for investigations into the violence in Addis Ababa on 17-18 April and urging that these investigations be thorough, independent, impartial and swift, and that any one found to be responsible for use of excessive force be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
 Meles Zenawi
 Prime Minister
 Office of the Prime Minister
 PO Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Fax: + 251 1 552020
Salutation: Your Excellency

Commissioner of Police
 Office of the Commissioner of Police
 Ministry of Justice
 PO Box 21321, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Fax:+ 251 1 550278
Salutation: Dear Sir

Mr Werede-Wold Wolde
 Minister of Justice
 Ministry of Justice
 PO Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Fax:+ 251 1 550278
Salutation:Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Ms Genet Zewdie
 Minister of Education
 Ministry of Education
 PO Box 1367, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Email: moe@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 26 July 2001.