



SUBMISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE 123RD SESSION, 2-27 JULY 2018



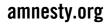
Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

© Amnesty International 2018 Except where otherwise noted, content in this document is licensed under a Creative Commons (attribution, non-commercial, no derivatives, international 4.0) licence. https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode For more information please visit the permissions page on our website: www.amnesty.org Where material is attributed to a copyright owner other than Amnesty International this material is not subject to the Creative Commons licence. First published in January 2018 by Amnesty International Ltd Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street London WCLX ODW. UK

Index: AFR 64/8531/2018 Original language: English





CONTENTS

	1	
1.	INTRODUCTION	4
2.	ARTICLE 2: RIGHT TO EFFECTIVE REMEDY	4
3.	ARTICLE 6: RIGHT TO LIFE	5
4.	ARTICLE 7: FREEDOM FROM TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT	5
5.	ARTICLE 8: FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY AND SERVITUDE	6
6.	ARTICLE 9, 18 AND 19: FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION	7
GRO	DUNDS FOR ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION	7
EVAS	ION OF OR DESERTION FROM INDEFINITE NATIONAL SERVICE	7
RELIC	SION AND BELIEF	8
PERCEIVED POLITICAL DISSENT		8
7.	ARTICLE 12: FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT	8
8.	ARTICLE 18: FREEDOM OF RELIGION	9
9.	ARTICLE 19: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION	10
10.	ARTICLE 19: ACCESS TO INFORMATION	10
11.	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE STATE UNDER CONSIDERATION	11

1. INTRODUCTION

Amnesty International submit this document in advance of the review of Eritrea by the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Committee (the Committee) in July 2018. Eritrea has been unwilling to implement international human rights standards since gaining its independence in May 1991. Though Eritrea acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (the Covenant) in 2002, the country has not, to date, fulfilled its obligations to submit its initial report and will be examined as a non-reporting state.

In 2016, the report of the Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry (COI) concluded that there are reasonable ground to believe the Eritrean authorities have committed crimes against humanity through "enslavement, imprisonment, enforced disappearance, torture, other inhumane acts, persecution, rape and murder...since 1991."1 There are, however, still no indications that the Eritrean authorities are willing to implement the recommendations made by the COI.²

This submission to the Committee is based on Amnesty International's research on Eritrea. It covers concerns relating to right to effective remedy, freedom from torture and other ill-treatment, freedom from servitude, freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, freedom of movement, freedom of religion.

2. ARTICLE 2: RIGHT TO **EFFECTIVE REMEDY**

The legal system in Eritrea fails to provide effective remedy to victims of human rights violations and lacks necessary laws and institutions to ensure implementation of the Covenant.

The Eritrean Constitution, adopted on 23 May 1997, includes a chapter on fundamental rights, freedoms and duties. However, Eritrea has never enforced, to date, the 1997 Constitution. On the Independence Day address to the public, President Isaias Afeworki announced that the 1997 Constitution no longer exists and a new Constitution is under preparation.³ The Eritrean authorities have so far not clarified the status of the 'new Constitution.'

National laws, including the Civil Code, the Civil Procedure Code, the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code,⁴ all fail to provide effective remedies for civil and political human rights violations. While some provisions in the Civil Procedure Code and the Criminal Procedure Code mention 'the Constitution,' it is unclear whether they are referring to the 1997 Constitution or the Constitution purportedly under preparation.

There is no known instance of Eritreans seeking and receiving remedies for civil and political rights violations within Fritrea.

¹ Human Rights Council (HRC), Report of the commission of inquiry on human rights in Eritrea (A/HRC/32/47), available at https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G16/093/42/PDF/G1609342.pdf?OpenElement (accessed on 25 January 2017). ² Human Rights Council, Resolution 32/24 on situation of human rights in Eritrea, A/HRC/RES/32/24, 15 July 2016.

³ President Isaias Afeworki, President of the State of Eritrea, Public Speech at Eritrean Independence 24 may 2014.

⁴ In May 2015, Eritrea has adopted a new Civil Code, Civil Procedure Code, Criminal Procedure Code and Penal Code.

3. ARTICLE 6: RIGHT TO LIFE

A long-standing policy to shoot people crossing the border into Ethiopia remains in place. All individuals interviewed by Amnesty International who left Eritrea for Ethiopia during late 2014 and 2015 or who had been guarding the border until they left the country confirmed that this policy was still in place at the time of their assignment.

At least 11 Eritreans were killed when trucks transporting national service conscripts were passing through the capital, Asmara, on 03 April 2016. The security forces shot and killed the 11 people, including women and children as well as bystanders, and injured others, when the conscripts jumped off the trucks.

4. ARTICLE 7: FREEDOM FROM TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

The Eritrean authorities use torture to punish prisoners detained for criticising the government, practising a religion not recognised by the State, attempted escape from or failure to perform duties during national military service (even as a result of infirmity or illness), insubordination, or for attempting to flee the country.5

Former detainees told Amnesty International that torture, or the threat of torture, was practised as punishment and during interrogation of forcibly returned asylum-seekers – those whose asylum claims in other countries had been rejected or who had no access to asylum procedures and were sent back to Eritrea. Returned asylum-seekers often faced torture and other ill-treatment as punishment for deserting national service, but also for suspected criticism of the government to foreigners in the course of trying to claim asylum.6

Former detainees told Amnesty International they were also tortured for the purposes of interrogation. In the case of detainees caught trying to flee the country, the objective is to extract information on their plans and arrangements for exiting the country. During interrogations, detainees were commonly compelled to admit they had intended to leave their country and reveal why they tried to leave and who had assisted them in doing so.7

Amnesty International's research has also revealed conditions of detention that amount to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment. Former detainees interviewed by Amnesty International spoke of prison overcrowding, as well as the widespread use of underground cells and shipping containers to hold prisoners. The use of metal shipping containers as detention facilities has been reported at, inter alia, Adi Abeto, Alla, Dahlak Kebir, Mai Edaga, Mai Serwa, Sawa, Wi'a, and many other prisons. The Eritrean authorities also detain children together with adults.8

Detainees received little food and drinking water, both reported to be of poor quality. Detention conditions were the same in all the prison sites. Former detainees also said they had limited access to toilet facilities,

⁵ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 36.

⁶ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 36-7.

⁷ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 36.

⁸ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, pp 39.

many cells having only one jerry-can for urine, with detainees being let out of the cell only once a day to defecate in the open. They also had almost no access to washing facilities.9

5. ARTICLE 8: FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY AND SERVITUDE

Eritrea's National Service Proclamation No. 82/1995 obligates 18 months of compulsory national service that includes a six-month military training followed by a 12-month military deployment or government service. In 2002, the government launched another mandatory National Service program called the 'Warsai Yikealo Development Campaign' (WYDC), which the Eritrean government claims is aimed at creating employment and improving living conditions, revitalizing Eritrea's economy, and reinstating Eritrea's social fabric.10 WYDC National Service conscripts are mandatorily deployed to various posts including in the civil service, national and local administrations, state-owned companies and in the military. The WYDC has therefore effectively extended the 18-month compulsory national service established under the 1995 proclamation to an indefinite period of national service with no or very little pay. The Eritrean government claims that the Labour Proclamation has abolished forced labour, and it guarantees equality of wages among similarly skilled workers as well as health and safety of the workplace.¹⁰ However, the National Service Program's use of conscript labour in mining and construction plants owned by private companies, as well as the indefinite nature of national service, amounts to forced labour. Despite promising in 2014 to end indefinite national service, there is no evidence that the Eritrean authorities have demobilized those in the national service beyond the statutory limit of 18 months.¹¹ Furthermore, the meager income of national service conscripts, which is also subjected to deductions and contributions to the government, remain too low for many to afford the cost of essentials including housing and food. As documented by the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea, many national service conscripts lack adequate food, water, hygienic facilities, accommodation and medical services.12

The Eritrean government maintains that education is "respected and protected as a right through the provisions of all aspects of the established institutional and legal framework of the State".¹³ However, the mandatory indefinite national service program and the lack of educational prospects has led many students to drop out of school. Authorities impose the mandatory conscription of students during the final years of their secondary education by forcing them to spend their final year at the Sawa Military Training Camp. After students write their secondary school leaving exam at the Military Camp, they are forced to automatically enroll and commence the six months military training. Students that score good grades at the secondary school leaving exam are assigned to continue their education in one of the public colleges, while the majority of the students are assigned to work in the military and civil sectors of the National Service. Students not assigned to colleges remain in National Service indefinitely. Eritrean youth approaching conscription age, being aware of the indefinite nature of national service, the low pay while in national service and the lack of livelihood choices once they are in national service drop out of the education system prior to twelfth grade in an effort to evade national service.

An ever-increasing number of teenagers attempt to leave the country to avoid conscription. Others try to avoid it by hiding whilst still in Eritrea. Desertion from national service also appears to be common. Conscripts attempt to run away from their posts or do not return to their assigned posts after a period of leave. However, Eritreans face arrest and detention if caught evading or deserting national service.¹⁴ The

⁹ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 39 & 41.

¹⁰ Eritrea Initial National Report to African Commission on Human and People's Rights (1999-2016), 28 March 2018, para. 217 and 224. ¹¹ Amnesty International, Just Deserters: why indefinite national service in Eritrea created a generation of refugees (AFR 64/4794/2016), August 2016, p 29.

¹² Report of Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea, United Nations Human Rights Council, 15 June 2015, A/HRC/29/42, para. 57.

¹³ Eritrea Initial National Report to African Commission on Human and People's Rights (1999-2016), 28 March 2018, para. 161.

¹⁴ Amnesty International, Just Deserters: why indefinite national service in Eritrea created a generation of refugees (AFR 64/4794/2016), August 2016, p 23.

military often conducts sudden searches and round-ups of suspected national service evaders. Young people of national service age, without proper permits, are often rounded up and subject to punishment before being sent to military training camps.¹⁵ None of those arbitrarily arrested and detained that Amnesty International spoke to during its research in 2016 had access to a lawyer or their families during their detention nor were they brought before a court of law. The duration of their arbitrary detention depended on the whim of commanding officers of the unit that arrested the alleged evader or deserter.¹⁶

6. ARTICLE 9, 18 AND 19: FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION

The Eritrean authorities carry out arbitrary arrest and detention for attempted evasion of national service or desertion from the same. Other common grounds for arbitrary arrest and detention are expressions of political dissent and worship of unregistered religions. None of the people formerly in arbitrary detention interviewed by Amnesty International had fair trials, access to a lawyer and family members or judicial review of their detention by a competent court.

GROUNDS FOR ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION

EVASION OF OR DESERTION FROM INDEFINITE NATIONAL SERVICE

Eritrean youth approaching conscription age are aware of the indefinite nature of national service, the low pay while in national service and the lack of livelihood choices once they are in national service. An everincreasing number of youth, therefore, many of them teenagers, attempt to leave the country to avoid conscription. Others try to avoid it by hiding whilst still in Eritrea. However, Eritreans face arbitrary arrest and detention if caught evading or deserting national service.¹⁷

The military conducts round-ups in cities and on known routes to leave the country. Information gathered by Amnesty International suggests that people of national service age, without proper permits, caught in round-ups are often punished before being sent for military training, on suspicion of attempts to evade conscription.¹⁸

Desertion from national service also appears to be common. Conscripts attempt to run away from their posts or do not return to their assigned posts after a period of leave.

None of those arbitrarily arrested and detained that Amnesty International spoke to had access to a lawyer, their family or a court during their detention. The duration of their arbitrary detention depended on the whim of commanding officers of the unit that arrested the evader or the deserter.¹⁹

¹⁵ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 27.

¹⁶ Amnesty International, Just Deserters: why indefinite national service in Eritrea created a generation of refugees (AFR 64/4794/2016), August 2016, p 24.

¹⁷ Amnesty International, Just Deserters: why indefinite national service in Eritrea created a generation of refugees (AFR 64/4794/2016), August 2016, p 23.

¹⁸ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 27.

¹⁹ Amnesty International, Just Deserters: why indefinite national service in Eritrea created a generation of refugees (AFR 64/4794/2016), August 2016, p 24.

RELIGION AND BELIEF

Thousands of people have been arrested for practising a religion not recognised by the state. Others have been arrested for conscientious objection to military service on religious groups, for suspected links with opposition movements supported by particular religious groups and for opposing government interference in religious affairs. These arrests are violations of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. None of those so arrested were charged with a crime or taken to court.

Amnesty International has documented that Jehovah's Witnesses are among those systematically persecuted by the Eritrean authorities. Since 1994, the Eritrean authorities have stripped Jehovah's Witnesses of their citizenship because they refused to vote in the independence referendum, as their faith demands political neutrality, and their on-going refusal to take part in national service because their faith prohibits bearing arms. Many Jehovah's Witnesses have been arrested for conscientious objection to national service and have been indefinitely detained, without charge or trial.

Leaders of registered religions are not spared from arbitrary arrest and detention either. Abune Antonios, Patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Church has been under house arrest since 2006, while 40 Muslim clerics and scholars from the Saho ethnic group have been in detention since 2008.

PERCEIVED POLITICAL DISSENT

Among those still in arbitrary detention are former top officials of the ruling party, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), merely for exercising their right to freedom of expression and opinion. When a group of 15 PFDJ top officials (the G15 as they became known), wrote an open letter to members of the PFDJ in May 2001 in which they issued 'a call for correction, a call for peaceful and democratic dialogue...a call for the rule of law and for justice,' 11 were arrested on 18 September 2001.²⁰ Three of the remaining members avoided arrest and the final member retracted his signature from the open letter.

On 19 September 2001, the day after the G15 arrest, the government withdrew the licenses of the country's eight independent newspapers and arrested ten leading journalists. Other journalists who had been warned of the crackdown managed to escape the country. The ten journalists included: Fessahaye Yohannes (also known as Joshua'), an Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) veteran, poet, dramatist and founder of Setit newspaper; Dawit Habtemichael, co-founder of Meqaleh (Echo) newspaper; Seyoum Tsehaye, former director of Eritrean state television; Temesgen Gebreyesus, a sports reporter and actor; and Dawit Isaak, a writer, theatre producer and co-owner of Setit newspaper. These journalists had published articles about democratic reform, including interviews with the G15 members and their own opinions on democratic reform.

Currently, at least 17 journalists are arbitrarily detained in Eritrea.

7. ARTICLE 12: FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

The Eritrean authorities restrict freedom of movement, including the right to leave the country. People moving without permits within the country or trying to leave Eritrea are subject to arbitrary arrest and detention and, if crossing the border into Ethiopia, the shoot-to-kill policy. The Eritrean authorities prohibit anyone between 5 to 50 years from leaving the country. Hence, Eritreans leaving for family reunifications abroad are forced to cross the borders by land and take their flights from another country. If the military catches them attempting to leave, they are held in detention until they pay an exorbitant penalty. The

²⁰ Haile Woldetensae; Mahmoud Ahmed Sheriffo (who was later Vice-President); Petros Solomon; Aster Fissehatsion, a prominent female EPLF leader; General Ogbe Abraha, Major-General Berhane Gebregziabeher; Brigadier General Estifanos Seyoum; Beraki Gebreselassie; Hamad Hamid Hamad; Saleh Kekiya; and Germano Nati.

amount of the fee varies according to the whims of the commanding officer, the time of the year, the distance from the border and the border they target to cross. If they are caught during the national holiday celebrating the struggle for independence, the fee is higher. The amount will increase if they are caught trying to cross the border with Ethiopia. If those caught are of the national service age, they are sent to Sawa military training centre.

8. ARTICLE 18: FREEDOM OF RELIGION

The Eritrean government maintains that freedom of religion is protected by law, specifically Proclamation No. 73/1995. However, since 2002, all religious groups - except the Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant (Evangelical and Lutheran) and Islam - were not able to exercise their freedom of religion because of government's ban of their operation until they re-register. Some minority religious groups reportedly attempted to re-register, but none were successful. Faith groups who receive funding from external sources are subject to particular scrutiny.18 Since 2002, scores of people have been arrested for practising their religion not recognised by the state.19 Others have been arrested for conscientious objection to military service on religious groups, for suspected links with opposition movements supported by particular religious groups and for opposing government interference in religion. None of those arrested are charged with a crime or taken to court. According to testimonies and reports received by Amnesty International in 2013, the arrests often take place during raids on prayer and worship meetings in private homes, or at weddings and funerals.²¹

Amnesty International has documented that Jehovah's Witness faith groups are among those systematically persecuted by the Eritrean authorities. Since 1994, the Eritrean authorities have stripped citizenship rights from followers of Jehovah's Witnesses because they allegedly refused to vote in the 1993 independence referendum, because their faith demands political neutrality. They are also persecuted because of their conscientious objection to the military service as their faith prohibits bearing arms. Many Jehovah's Witnesses have been arrested and remain in prolonged detention, without charge or trial.²²

Leaders of registered religious groups are not spared from arbitrary arrest and detention either. Abune Antonios, Patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Church, who objected government's interference into Orthodox Christianity, has been under house arrest since 2006. A group of 40 Muslim clerics and scholars from the Saho ethnic group have been in detention since 2008.²³

Government restrictions on religious freedom is also manifested through government regulatory controls on operations of private schools, and religion-affiliated schools. The 31 October 2017 protests in Asmara were caused by a government directive that required the Al Dia a Islamic School to drop religious teachings, ban the use of hijab and stop the separation of sexes. The now late Hajji Musa, who was a board member of the Al Dia a Islamic School - a school that teaches Islam in addition to the secular curriculum - was arrested in October 2017 together with the rest of his colleagues on the board after publicly speaking out against the government's efforts to impose restrictions on their school. His health deteriorated after his arrest and died in custody in March 2018 but the rest of the school board members remain in detention. None of them have been charged or brought to Court.

²¹ Amnesty International, Eritrea: 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 21.

²² Amnesty International, Eritrea, 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013) May 2013, p 21.

²³ Amnesty International, Eritrea, 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013) May 2013, p 24.

9. ARTICLE 19: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Freedom of expression remains severely restricted in Eritrea. At least 17 journalists are arbitrarily detained some of whom have been in detention for many years.²⁴ The 11 former government officials and 10 journalists who were arrested in 2001 remain in arbitrary detention. The 11 former government officials are part of the group (commonly referred to as the G15) who wrote an open letter to members of the PFDJ in May 2001 in which they made 'a call for correction [of the party's wrong path], peaceful and democratic dialogue, the rule of law and justice.' Eleven of them were arrested on 18 September 2001,²⁵ three of the remaining members were able to avoid arrest as they were outside of the country, and one member of the group retracted his signature after being arrested.

On 19 September 2001, the day after the arrest, the government withdrew the licenses of the country's eight independent newspapers and arrested ten leading journalists. Other journalists who had been warned of the crackdown managed to escape the country. The ten journalists included: Fessahaye Yohannes (also known as Joshua), an Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) veteran, poet, dramatist and founder of Setit newspaper; Dawit Habtemichael, cofounder of Meqaleh (Echo) newspaper; Seyoum Tsehaye, former director of Eritrean state television; Temesgen Gebreyesus, a sports reporter and actor; and Dawit Isaak, a writer, theatre producer and co-owner of Setit newspaper. These journalists had published articles about democratic reform, including interviews with the G15 members and their own opinions on democratic reform. There is no publicly available information on the fate of these detainees except some unconfirmed reports of deaths while in detention.²⁶

The incommunicado detention of political dissenters and journalists in secret locations and denial of their rights to lawyers, a fair trial, and access to family for such a long time is a severe violation of Articles 9, 10 &11 as well as Articles 4,6,7,8, and 13 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

10. ARTICLE 19: ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Since 2001, the government has withdrawn licenses of all independent newspapers and arrested 10 prominent journalists.²⁷ Even journalists working for government controlled media outlets are not spared of arbitrary arrest. For instance, on 22 February 2009, an estimated 50 people, comprising the entire staff of Radio Bana – a station broadcasting educational programmes under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Education – were reportedly arrested. Most were reportedly released soon after, but at least 12 remain in

 ²⁴ Committee for Protection of Journalists, CPJ welcomes release of six Eritrean journalists, <u>https://cpj.org/2015/01/cpj-welcomes-release-of-six-eritrean-journalists.php</u>, 23 January 2015
 ²⁵ Those arrested were Haile Woldetensae; Mahmoud Ahmed Sheriffo (who was later Vice-President); Petros Solomon; Aster Fissehatsion, a

²⁵ Those arrested were Haile Woldetensae; Mahmoud Ahmed Sheriffo (who was later Vice-President); Petros Solomon; Aster Fissehatsion, a prominent female EPLF leader; General Ogbe Abraha, MajorGeneral Berhane Gebregziabeher; Brigadier General Estifanos Seyoum; Beraki Gebreselassie; Hamad Hamid Hamad; Saleh Kekiya; and Germano Nati.

²⁶ The only information the public has been given regarding the prisoners' fates is through a former prison guard's interview with Human Rights Concern Eritrea in 2011. <u>http://www.asmarino.com/interviews/1182-interview-with-eyob-bahta-english-version</u> (last accessed 23 March 2018). The interviewee stated that Fessehaye (Joshua) Yohannes (journalist), Ogbe Abraha (PFDJ official), Mohammed Sherifo (PFDJ official), and Aster Fissehatsien (PFDJ official) have all died. Haile (Durue) Woldetensae's (PFDJ official) death was reported in February 2018. It is also widely reported, but not verified, that Fessehaye (Joshua) Yohannes (journalist), Medhanie Haile (journalist), Yusef Muhamed Ali (journalist), Mattewos Habteab (journalist), and Said Abdulkadir (journalist) have also died in prison.

²⁷ Amnesty International, Eritrea, 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 19

arbitrary detention. They have not been charged or brought before court.²⁸ In February and March 2011, four journalists working for the government-controlled radio Dimtsi Hafash were arrested but have not been charged or brought to court.²⁹

According to the Internet World Stats, only 1.3 percent of the Eritrean population has access to internet.³⁰ That makes Eritrea the country with the lowest percentage of internet users in Africa. Access to phone SIM cards is allowed only for people who have clearance from the government or are excused from national service.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE STATE UNDER CONSIDERATION

Amnesty International recommends that the Eritrean authorities:

promptly adopt laws and establish institutions that provide effective remedy for violations of human rights enshrined in the Covenant;

- stop the shoot-to-kill policy against people leaving Eritrea through the Ethio-Eritrea border;
- stop any act of torture and other ill-treatment of people in detention;
- demobilise national service conscripts that have served more than 18 months;
- promptly demobilizing all those who have served more than the 18 months of national service, and provide reparations, including compensation proportionate to the excess time served;
- adopt new policies or amending exiting polices on national service, including the WYDC, to end the
 practice of indefinite national service as well as effective demobilization of all conscripts who have
 served more than legally stipulated 18 months of service;
- ending the practice of assigning National Service conscripts as labour to private companies;
- ensure that all conscripts, whether during training or in their assigned posts, are provided with
 accommodation and conditions which comply with international human rights standards, in particular
 guaranteeing their rights to food, water, adequate housing and the highest attainable standard of
 physical and mental health;
- repeal or amend all national laws and policies that violate the rights to exercise freedom of religion and ensure these rights are fully guaranteed and protected;
- make provision for conscientious objection to military service and ensure that, if conscientious
 objectors are not entirely exempted from military service, they have the option to perform an appropriate
 alternative non-punitive service of a civilian character under civilian control and of a length comparable
 to that of military service;
- ensure the right to freedom of movement, including the right to leave the country;
- release, immediately and unconditionally, all people detained arbitrarily, including the 11 former government officials and 10 journalists;

²⁸ Amnesty International, Eritrea, 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 20.

²⁹ Amnesty International, Eritrea, 20 years of independence, but still no freedom (AFR 04/001/2013), May 2013, p 20

³⁰ Internet World Stats, Internet Users in Africa, June 2017, available at <u>https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm</u> (Seen on 26 February 2018).

- allow journalists and all media workers to operate freely and independently including ensuring effective legal protection against arbitrary arrest, harassment and intimidation;
- allow the establishment and operation of private media institutions and services, including reinstating licenses of all independent newspapers revoked since 2011.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. WHEN INJUSTICE HAPPENS TO ONE PERSON, IT MATTERS TO US ALL.

CONTACT US



info@amnesty.org

+44 (0)20 7413 5500



www.facebook.com/AmnestyGlobal

. Y

@AmnestyOnline

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



SUBMISSION TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

123RD SESSION, 2-27 JULY 2018

Amnesty International submit this document in advance of the review of Eritrea by the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Committee (the Committee) in July 2018. Eritrea has been unwilling to implement international human rights standards since gaining its independence in May 1991. Though Eritrea acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (the Covenant) in 2002, the country has not, to date, fulfilled its obligations to submit its initial report and will be examined as a nonreporting state.

This submission to the Committee is based on Amnesty International's research on Eritrea. It covers concerns relating to right to effective remedy, freedom from torture and other ill-treatment, freedom from servitude, freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, freedom of movement, freedom of religion.

INDEX: AFR 64/8531/2018 JUNE 2018 LANGUAGE: ENGLISH



