

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 25/003/2002

EXTRA 12/02

Fear for

**ETHIOPIA Opposition demonstrators**

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Opposition parties are planning a major demonstration in the capital, Addis Ababa, on 10 February. Police have previously used excessive force to break up demonstrations and Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the demonstrators.

The opposition Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) and others feel that the government has not fully represented the Ethiopian case to the international commission that is currently deciding upon the demarcation of the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. They have organised the demonstration, and may be joined by two other political groups: the All Amhara People's Organisation (AAPO) and the Oromo National Congress (ONC).

Although police have finally given permission for the demonstration Amnesty International remains concerned for the safety of those involved. The police have admitted using excessive force when they put down a riot in April 2001, leaving at least 31 people dead.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

War broke out in May 1998 between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It was ended by the Algiers Agreement of December 2000, under which an international Boundary Commission was set up to rule on where the countries' border lies. The Commission is expected to reach a conclusion on the demarcation of the border by the end of February 2002. Both sides have agreed to abide by its ruling.

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

- urging the authorities to ensure that police allow the 10 February demonstration to go ahead peacefully;
- asking them to ensure that if there is any disturbance at the demonstration, police use only the minimum force necessary to contain it, in accordance with the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.

**APPEALS TO:**

Major Befekadu Tollera  
Commissioner of Police  
Office of Commissioner of Police  
Ministry of Justice  
P O Box 21321, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
**Fax: + 251 1 550278**  
**Salutation: Dear Commissioner**

Mr Isayas Wolde Giorgis  
General Manager, Public Security  
Office of the Prime Minister  
P O Box 1031, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
**Fax: + 251 1 552020**  
**Salutation: Dear Sir**

**COPIES TO:**

His Excellency

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

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 11 February 2002.