

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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"Disappearances" / Fear for safety

25 August 1994

ETHIOPIA Abdi Sheikh Muhumed Irad, brother of a previously killed ONLF official  
Haji Abdinasir Sheikh Mumin, Imam of Degabur mosque  
Abdullahi Abdi ("Taflo"), ONLF central committee member  
Abshir Abdi Sugeh, regional member of parliament (ONLF)  
Abdullahi Moallin Mohamed, ONLF official  
Ali Deg Ahmed, ONLF official  
Ali Mohamed Bedel, mechanic  
Ali Yare, regional member of parliament (ONLF)  
Deg Yusuf Kariye, journalist  
Ibado Abdullahi ("Gabya") (f), poet, president of Ogadenian Women's Democratic Alliance  
Mohamoud Ugas Muhumed Ugas Hashi, former university lecturer in science, president of Ogaden Welfare Society  
Mawlid Omer Shiddey ("Habib"), ONLF official  
Mohamed Abdi Farah, merchant  
Abdi Mohamed Farah  
Mohamed Abdi Muhumed  
Sulub Abas

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The 16 people named above, all members or suspected members of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), have "disappeared" in military custody. There are serious fears for their safety, particularly in view of recent reports of the extrajudicial execution of suspected ONLF supporters, including some killed after having been kept in incommunicado detention for up to three months.

Reports of more arrests now being carried out in "Region Five" have heightened fears that further human rights violations may be occurring in what is emerging as a pattern of arbitrary, unlawful and incommunicado detention, torture, "disappearances" and killings of government opponents or suspected opponents in the ONLF.

Region Five in eastern Ethiopia, also known as the Ogaden, and inhabited predominantly by ethnic Somalis, has been a virtually closed military zone for several months. Information coming out of the region about human rights abuses is often limited or delayed. However, there have not been any recent reports of fighting in the region by ONLF elements.

Those named above were arrested by government soldiers at different times between March and late July 1994 in Godey, Dire Dawa or Dagabur in Region Five. They are not believed to have been engaged in violent opposition to the government. The authorities have refused to say where they are held or what has happened to them.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The ONLF won the regional assembly elections in 1993 and led the regional administration in Region Five. In 1994 ONLF demands for a referendum on independence for the region led to a major dispute with the central government and to the removal of pro-independence ONLF regional assembly members.

(See also UA 75/94, AFR 25/08/94, 24 February 1994 and update (20 May, AFR 25/15/94) and UA 194/94, AFR 25/14/94, 19 May 1994.)

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail

**letters either in English or in your own language:**

- expressing concern at the "disappearance" of the above-named members or suspected members of the ONLF in military custody (naming some or all);
- calling for them to be brought immediately before a judge, and to be given immediate access to their families, lawyers and medical treatment, and to representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross;
- expressing concern at reports of further arrests being carried out in Region Five, particularly in view of the above "disappearances" and other reported human rights violations, including the extrajudicial execution of political detainees;
- seeking assurances that all detainees are being treated humanely in accordance with international standards for detention;
- urging that anyone arrested solely on account of their non-violent opinions should be immediately and unconditionally released.

**APPEALS TO**

1) His Excellency President Meles Zenawi  
Office of the President  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Telegrams: President Meles, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Telexes: 21050 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Faxes: + 251 1 514300 or 511244 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

2) Mr Seye Abraha  
Minister of Defence  
Ministry of Defence  
P O Box 1373

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Telegrams: Defence Minister, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Telexes: 21050 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Faxes: + 251 1 514300 or 511244**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

3) Mr Kinfu Gebre-Medhin  
Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs (head of security)  
Ministry of Internal Affairs  
P O Box 5721

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**Telegrams: Vice-Minister Kinfu, Internal Affairs, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Telexes: 21050 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

**Faxes: + 251 1 514300 or 511244**

**Salutation: Dear Vice-Minister**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

1) Mr Hassan Shiffa  
Coordinator of Police and Prison Administration  
Ministry of Internal Affairs  
P O Box 5721, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

2) Mr Mahteme Solomon  
Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
P O Box 1370, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

3) Commander Molla, EPRDF military headquarters, Godey, Ethiopia

4) Mr Ali Ugas Muhumed Qani, President of the Regional Assembly, Jijiga, Ethiopia

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 6 October 1994.