

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION POLITICIAN UNDER HOUSE ARREST

Dawud Ibsa, the chairman of the Oromo Liberation Front, an Ethiopian oppositional political party, has been placed under house arrest in his home in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, since 3 May 2021. This was done after the police conducted an illegal search of his home and seized electronic equipment. The police have not allowed anyone to leave or enter the compound of Dawud Ibsa's residence since they placed him on house arrest and there is now serious concern over Dawud Ibsa's wellbeing as he may have run out or is close to running out of food and other essential items. The authorities have yet to present Dawud Ibsa with any charges. He must be immediately released.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Minister of Peace
Muferiat Kamil
Ethio-Chinese Friendship Road
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 5608
Email: mopeaceoffice@gmail.com
Twitter: @MoP_Ethiopia

Dear Minister Muferiat Kamil,

*I am writing to express concern about the arbitrary arrest of **Dawud Ibsa**, a politician and chairman of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), an Ethiopian oppositional political party. On 3 May, the Federal police placed Dawud Ibsa under house arrest without bringing any charges against him. This was done after the police unlawfully searched and seized the electronic equipment in his house, including laptop computers and mobile phones, without presenting a search or seizure warrant. The police have not allowed anyone to leave or enter the compound of Dawud Ibsa's residence in Addis Ababa, in the capital, since they placed him on house arrest on 3 May. There is therefore serious concern over Dawud Ibsa's wellbeing as the food and other essential items in the house have either ran out or are close to doing so.*

Dawud Ibsa's detention did not happen in a vacuum. According to the OLF spokesperson, the party had to withdraw from the general election originally scheduled for 21 June 2021 because of the arbitrary detention of many of its leaders and members and the authorities' closure of their offices in Addis Abba and other parts of the country.

From the start of his house arrest, the authorities have failed to present Dawud Ibsa with an arrest warrant or court order. Nor have they informed him of the reason for his arrest. His prolonged house arrest amounts to arbitrary detention, and it imposes arbitrary restrictions on his rights to freedom of movement and association. I am further concerned that Dawud Ibsa is being detained solely in connection to his opposition to the government and political affiliations. The authorities must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights to freedom of expression and association, in accordance with Ethiopia's international human rights obligations.

In light of the above, I urge you to immediately release Dawud Ibsa from house arrest, or, if there is sufficient evidence of wrongdoing, promptly charge him with a recognisable offence, in accordance with international standards. Pending release or charge, I urge you to ensure he has access to food and other essential items.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Under international human rights law, house arrest is considered as a form of detention and requires certain safeguards to be considered lawful. According to the UN Human Rights Committee's General Comment 35 on Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights liberty-depriving measures, including house arrest, must not be arbitrary and must be carried out with respect for the rule of law and allow a meaningful and prompt judicial review of detention. Deprivation of liberty, including in the form of house arrest, is arbitrary when it results from the exercise of human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Amharic

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 10 AUGUST 2021

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Dawud Ibsa (he/him/his)