

The Abuse of the Sidama Women by the EPRDF regime of Ethiopia.

By our Reporter from Awassa, Sidama.

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The Sidama mother of a 3-month baby went to visit her brother, Walelign Haxisso, who has been jailed and tortured among hundreds of other Sidamas for alleged organization of peaceful anti-government demonstration on May 24, 2002. Approximately 7000 (seven thousand) ethnic Sidamas have participated in this peaceful anti-government rally organized to oppose illegal decisions of Meles Zenawi's regime to remove the Sidama people from their home land of Awassa town. While several other Sidamas have been released from jail since then, individuals like Walelign Haxisso, Isayas Siblu, Bolka Duressa, Tadesse Buro, Tamiru Tesema, Shalamo Jiressa and Yohanes Qunassa have been detained indefinitely and have been tortured continually for the past 2 years. They have also been transferred from Awassa to a notorious prison cell in the desert of Omo valley for over a year in 2003/2004 as we have mentioned on various occasions on this site.

Zeritu Haxisso (Sister of Walelign Haxisso) went to visit her brother mentioned above in Awassa prison on March 19, 2005. When she arrived there, the police beat her unconscious, tied her with chains and threw her into the same prison. No reason was given for such gruesome abuse of the right of this woman because of her visit of her sibling in the prison cell. The relatives brought highly affected baby of 3 months to unite him with the mother. However, the brutal TPLF police forces have rejected the request of the relatives. As a result the innocent mother of 3 months baby and the other 2 children continue to suffer in Awassa prison while her baby's situation deteriorates because of the refusal of the police to allow the mother to take care of the child.

Meanwhile, the brother and his jail mates protested inside the prison house against such barbaric treatment of the sister of Walelign Haxisso for her attempt to visit him in the prison. Because they asked to the prison wardens to stop mistreating the innocent mother of 3 children, the police impounded them inside the prison cell, beat all of them unconscious and chained them. These people are made to suffer in prison for the cases for which the government failed to produce any evidences and witnesses for the past two years.

This is how the decadent TPLF regime abuses the right of the Sidama people particularly those of the vulnerable group of the society like women. The regime does this at the time when it lies to the international community that it seeks the 3rd term in office during the upcoming May 2005 elections to promote "human rights, democracy and development" to the Ethiopian peoples. However, it is clear to the Ethiopian peoples and the international community lately, that the TPLF regime is one of the regimes that exercise the worst forms of abuse of human and democratic rights in the world. The recent statement by the US Department of State about the gross abuse of human rights in Ethiopia by the incumbent regime is the a step in the right direction indicating that the international community has lately woken up about the atrocities in Ethiopia.

Therefore, we call up on the international community, and particularly the international organizations concerned with the rights of women to intervene to stop the gross abuse of the rights of women and other vulnerable people in the Sidamaland in Ethiopia.

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