



Concerned Ethiopians in Toronto Coordinating Committee

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March 5, 2012

The Honourable Jens Stoltenberg, Prime Minister
The Royal Kingdom of Norway
Akersgata 42, Popsboks 8001 Dep 0030
Oslo, Norway.

Dear Prime Minister:

We are writing to you, on behalf of over 1,000 Ethiopians who are seeking asylum in Norway due to the Norwegian government signed an agreement on the 26th of January 2012 with the Dictatorship of Ethiopia to deport 400 Ethiopian refugees to Ethiopia, a country whose regime is one of the most despotic, brutal and repressive violators of human rights in the world today. Under the governance of the Ethiopian regime, the regime with which your government has chosen to enter into this agreement without considering persecution and risk to their life when they returns to Ethiopia.

We Ethiopians living all over the world appreciate that ,you value dearly the issues of human rights, justice, democracy, freedom of opinion and freedom of expression. Above all Norway, to whom you are

the Prime Minister not only a signatory of the Geneva Convention, but also a country that awards a Noble Peace Prize to those who stood for peace, justice and freedom.

As peace and freedom loving Ethiopian, however, wear troubled and horrified to learn that your Government has rejected unjustly and unfairly application for political asylum to over 1,000 Ethiopians political asylum seekers .We have learned that:

1. Application for political asylum of Ethiopians is treated unjustly, unfairly and collectively, rather than treating on an individual basis, i.e on a case by case basis.
2. Those, whose application being rejected are law abiding Ethiopians political refugees lived, worked and paid taxes for long time.
3. Included in the rejection process, are those children born in Norway, the country they only know and belong to.
4. The reasoning given by your government for the rejection is as such—that the raising economic boom, freedom and justice in Ethiopia, and hence genuine political asylum seekers being considered as an economic refugee.

Your Honorable Prime Minister

Most of these Ethiopians have played a vital role in exposing the crimes and misdeeds of the current tyrannical regime in Ethiopia; they will definitely face imprisonment, torture or being killed should they return to Ethiopia. The Ethiopian dictatorial regime led by Mr. Meles Zenawi, as described by Helen Epstein in her article *Cruel Ethiopia* published on The New York Review Books dated April 21, 2010 noted that “there are two Prime Minister Meles Zenawi; One a

Clubbable, charming African who gives moving speeches at elite forums about terrorism and poverty, and the other is a dictator whose totalitarianism dates back to the cold war days”. The State Department of the USA on its 2010 report also noted “...that the Meles government is engaged in killings, tortures, arbitrary arrest, and restriction of freedom of movement, assembly and mistreatment of detainees. The Human Rights Watch on its December 17, 2010 issue stated “...the government of Ethiopia uses development aid for state repression by way of routinely discriminating against people viewed as political opposition supporters”. The aid your government provides the Meles regime as such being used to suppress political dissent by conditioning access to essential services on support for the ruling party led Mr. Meles Zenawi.

To bring to your attention the regime of Meles Zenawi should be brought to face justice at the International Criminal Court (*ICC*), for he is responsible:

1. for the death of 193 innocent Ethiopians after the 2005 general election,
2. for the genocide of over 450 Anuaks in 2003,
3. for the massacre of 70 Sidamas in Sidamo
4. for the continues killing of thousands of Ogaden Somalis
5. For killing, torture and disappearance of thousands of Oromos and Amharas, and last not least.
6. for the death by starvation of the citizens of Ethiopia for the last 20 years.

Under the governance of the Mr. Zenawi regime with which your government has chosen to enter in to this agreement, to mention a few, the following are routine occurrences and orders of the day:

- Educators, human rights activists, political leaders, journalists, students and spiritual leaders are subjected to extreme suffering in the form of harassment, imprisonment, torture and execution.
- Farmers who happen to support and work with oppositional parties, or who are suspected of doing so, are systematically abused and punished by being denied access to fertilizers, improved seeds, humanitarian help and other social services.
- Thousands of people are forcibly evicted from their homes and farm land without any compensation what-so-ever to make way for commercial farms, resulting in extreme poverty, victims of malnutrition, sickness and starvation.
- The government regularly capitalizes on ethnic and religious differences to commit atrocities such as massacres, genocide, denying international donated food to certain ethnic groups to “starve them out”, that fomented ethnic conflicts, among and between different communities and religions.
- On the basis of a number of an over-night drafted and implemented dramatic laws, including the anti-terrorism law, the government penalizes dissent, curbs freedom of expression and free media, cracks down the opposition, pro-democracy and human rights activists.
- Be it development aid or grant that where meant for intended use have been abused by the government as a means to stay in power, and least but not last by depositing in foreign banks.
- Ethiopian refugees who were routinely forcibly repatriated from the Sudan and Djibouti to Ethiopia consistently disappear without trace while in government custody.

The above being the true deeds of the despotic regime of Meles Zenawi, the unjust and unfair treatment of Ethiopian political asylum seekers in Norway is not only a violation of justice, fairness and human rights ,but also condemning them to torture and death.

Therefore, we all Ethiopians together re-appeal to your government, to stop deportation and review and correct the unjust and unfair asylum granting policy towards Ethiopians. We kindly ask for assistance from you to allow them to have access to a fair asylum process. If these Ethiopians deported to Ethiopia we can assure you that they end up in being tortured, imprisonment and death. If your government declines Ethiopian asylum seekers be part of the Norwegian society and contribute their best to Norway therefore, Your Honorable Prime Minister must provide them protection and a work permit until the United Nation Higher Commission for Refugees (*UNHCR*)arranges a third country to move to.

We hope that our appeal will receive your serious attention and decision.

Best Regards,

B. Mamo

Concerned Ethiopians in Toronto

Coordinator