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MAY DAY 2017--PLIGHT OF WORKERS WORSENS IN ETHIOPIA

The demagoguery of progress of workers' rights in Ethiopia is nauseating and very false. Within the general framework of the gross violation of basic human rights the conditions of workers in Ethiopia has worsened.

Workers in Ethiopia have no autonomous unions, are denied the right to strike and the decreed labor law is a confirmation of their absence of basic rights. Foreign agro industrial firms and farms pay workers starvation wages. Chinese employers have been given the right to beat workers they consider "lazy". Chinese, Dutch and Arab employers continue to subject workers not only to brutal exploitation but also to crude racism. The regime also discriminates against workers on the basis of ethnic group and gender--with women paid much less than the male workers. Complaints of workers on beatings, illegal termination of employment, sexual harassment and even rape have been ignored. Double digit economic growth is fiction and statistical manipulation while poverty accompanies most workers who are pounded further by the high cost of living and the freezing of wages.

As the world observes May Day 2017 workers in Ethiopia have little to celebrate about a situation where close to 3000 protesters have been killed and more than 50,000 rounded up and jailed in the last few months. The absence or penury of water and electricity even in Addis Abeba has adversely affected the life of workers and the rate of unemployment is high. Hence, no progress in combating poverty and the absence of basic rights. What is in place is a one ethnic based dictatorship with pronounced hostility towards the working majority.

Call for an end to the repression, exploitation and violation of basic rights of the working people in Ethiopia.