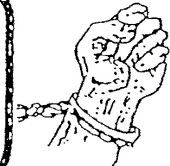




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SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR ETHIOPIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS (SOCEPP)



December 22/2009

KANGAROO COURT AND DEATH SENTENCES DENOUNCED

The court controlled by the ruling EPRDF sentenced five people to death and 33 others to life imprisonment in what is considered a trumped up charge of coup d' etat and assassination attempt. The accused are actual and alleged members of the Ginbot 7 opposition group led by former members of the CUD.

The court proceeding was unfair and sham from the outset and the court refused to even acknowledge the fact that the prisoners were tortured severely and subjected to ethnic discriminatory taunts. Some of the condemned are in exile in the USA and Europe but most were in court to be condemned to death and life imprisonment and have their properties confiscated. Most people reject the allegation that a coup d' etat was being prepared as any sane person would realize that it takes more than 40 or so people to stage a coup in a country ruled by a minority clique imposing quasi absolute control over the army and repressive apparatus. The ruling TPLF/EPRDF lost the 1997 general election but stole the voice of the people and after killing hundreds and imprisoning thousands stayed in power with the backing of some Western countries. As the country proceeds to the May 2010 election whose result is already known (the EPRDF would win it hands down) the regime is resorting to its perennial repressive and barbaric ways, chasing independent journalists into exile, arresting dissidents and condemning others to death and life imprisonment. The rule of force, the message of terror.

SOCEPP strongly condemns the proceedings of the kangaroo court and its harsh sentences (death and life in prison) and calls on the international forces struggling for the respect of human rights to raise their voices against this illegal action.

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