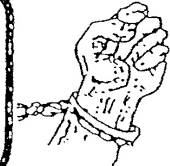




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SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR ETHIOPIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS (SOCEPP)



February 10/2010

OPEN LETTER TO PREISDENT JACOB ZUMA

PROTECT ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES IN SOUTH AFRICA

On February 7, shops owned by Ethiopians and other foreign nationals were looted and the refugees attacked in a service delivery protest that, as happened in July 2009, turned violent and xenophobic. The attacks took place in Siyathemba and Balfour townships.

The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) has added its voice against these attacks which continue because the perpetrators are not brought to justice. A Task force of Ministers which visited the affected townships, much as Your Excellency has done in a surprise visit, has not come up with any effective and sustainable solution. The refugees are being used as convenient excuses by protesting people and this must be stopped as it is unjust on all grounds. In July 2009, many Ethiopians, like Zimbabweans though in a lesser number, were victims of violence and looting and were displaced too. Most Ethiopians fled to South Africa to flee persecution much as South Africans came to Ethiopia as refugees during the Apartheid rule. South Africa must respect the right of refugees and protect Ethiopians from xenophobic violence.

Excellency, Ethiopia is presently suffering under a one ethnic base dictatorship that has emerged as one of the worst human rights violators in the continent. It is not by accident that many Ethiopians face dangers and even death to make their way to South Africa to find refuge. Hence, their refugee rights and safety should not be compromised.

SOCEPP thanks you Excellency.

INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS INJUSTICE EVERYWHERE
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