
Political detention and killings in Ethiopia 2008 - 2010

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We also would like to bring to everyone's attentions that all these extrajudicial punishments and human rights violations are being inflicted on Oromo sons and daughters, not because they committed any crime, but simply because they attempted to exercise their fundamental human rights that are universally recognized. Finally, we call up on all regional and international human rights and political organizations to interfere, for the sake of human dignity, in the never-ending, but not well-noticed, Ethiopian political problem that is threatening not only local but also regional political stability.

Oromo political prisoners' appeal, published by the Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa, 25 July 2009 (p. 15).

2010: Opposition threatened, detained and branded illegal

Detention of political opposition figures has been continuing since the last national election in 2005 and has accelerated in early 2010. Legal Ethiopian opposition parties are complaining of harassment, intimidation and the detention and killing of their members and supporters: this persecution is now officially sanctioned by the government party and is backed by legislation.

Reuters reported on a press conference held by the main opposition coalition, Medrek – the Forum for Democratic Dialogue, on 17 February. Former Ethiopian President, Negasso Gidada, exhibited a government party newsletter which called for the party faithful to 'track opposition members,' to follow, photograph and document their movements, and to collect their literature so it could 'be used against opposition leaders to accuse them and bring them to court'.

The Anti-Terrorist Law which was passed in July 2009 (see p. 14) allows the prosecution of government critics and their imprisonment for up to 20 years or life.

Recent wave of arrests in Oromia Region: shootings

In its first Press Release for 2010, the Toronto-based Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa (HRLHA) reported in January that several hundred civilians in Oromia Region had been arrested mid-month. The Hannover-based Oromo Human Rights and Relief Organisation (Oromo Menschenrechts-und Hilfsorganisation, OMRHO, 20 January) corroborated this report of widespread arrests and estimated that more than 500 had been detained on 14 and 15 January in Hararge zone alone – about 350 in Haromaya and the others in Kombolcha, Deder, Karro, Dhangago and Qarsaa.

A 7th Grade school student, **Caalaa**, was **shot dead** by security forces in Qarsaa, and two others, **Tofiq** and **Abdujabbar Aliyi**, were **shot and wounded** before being taken away by security forces, according to the OMRHO report.

Arrests beginning on 14 January were also reported from Sigimo and Gatira in Illubabor, from Horo Guduru in Wallega, Yabello and Liban in Borana, Dugdaa and Bishoftu in E. Showa, Ambo in W. Showa and from Arsi and Bale zones.

Detainees were accused of involvement with the OLF and most were held incommunicado in unknown locations. The Oromo People's Congress (OPC), a Medrek coalition partner, reported that at least 157 of its members were among those arrested,

including regional representatives and central committee members Fikadu Tefera (Wallega), Demelash Tadesse (Arsi) and Tolesa Bacho Jilcha (Showa). Twenty five of the 157 members and supporters, mainly students and teachers, are named in Appendix 1. Two other central committee members, Niguse Mekonnen Gammada and Abduljabbar Bashir, were appointed to replace Demelash Tadesse at the Arsi office but they too were arrested and imprisoned.

The January OMRHO report, HRLHA (Urgent Action No. 8, January) and Advocacy for Ethiopia (13 January) recorded the detention of three university students in Awassa, (Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region - SNNPR) on 5 and 6 January. Nagga Gezew (2nd year civil engineering), Ms Jatani Wario (2nd year co-operative) and Dhaba Girre (3rd year management) were taken from the campus by security forces to an unknown destination and were later reported to be held in Maikelawi Central Investigation Department (CID) in Addis Ababa. They had been involved in protests about the contamination of local rivers and streams by gold mining activity at Lega Denbi, Gujji/Borana zone of Oromia Region. HRLHA reported that other students had probably been detained in addition to the three named.

In January, a representative of the Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM, a Medrek coalition partner) in Nekemte, Wallega, was fined and sentenced to three months detention, thus preventing his registering as an election candidate. Qinati Abdisa was accused of illegally possessing a gun, which according to his family was placed in his home by security forces (*Fitih* newspaper, 8 January).

OFDM leader, Bulcha Demeksa, said that seven other OFDM members had been recently detained along with 297 Shakiso residents who were protesting against Midroc gold mining company activities in their area.

Amharic weekly *Sendek*, 24 February, reported complaints from Medrek chairman and Oromo People's Congress leader Merera Gudina that his party was unable to field candidates in five woredas of Oromia Region because of government actions. Masked men attacked and damaged a party vehicle, stole documents and beat representatives travelling to E. Wallega to register candidates. Local government officials and security forces were involved in the attacks. EDP chairman, Lidetu Ayelew also complained to *Sendek* that registration of candidates was obstructed and that government cadres intimidated, arrested and beat his party's candidates.

Tigray Arena party arrests and threats

According to information circulated by the Office of Analysis for Africa in the US State Department on 14 February, the leader of the Arena opposition party in Tigray Region, Gebru Asrat, accused security forces of detaining seven Tigrean farmers a few weeks previously for travelling to Addis Ababa to complain to human rights organisations of their being denied food aid for political reasons. They were returned to Tigray Region after five days and threatened with long prison terms for speaking to foreigners and 'betraying their country'. An American journalist who travelled to Tigray to investigate the issue of denial of food aid to political opponents was detained for two days and threatened with deportation.

Political persecution and killings in 2008

Oromia Support Group (OSG) Report 44, August 2008, included information on the release and pardon of many Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) party members in 2007 and human rights lawyers Netsanet Demessie and Daniel Bekele in 2008. They were arrested after the success of the CUD and other opposition parties in the 2005 national election. The report also documented abuses associated with the 2008 local elections and by-elections, the arrests of several hundred opposition supporters and widespread intimidation, which resulted in the loss of opposition gains made in 2005.

Since that report was written, information on the deaths in detention of two CUD members was received. **Gedlu Ayele died in Kaliti prison** on 16 July 2008 and **Ergata Gobena died** one month earlier (*Addis Neger* newspaper, 19 July). Former fellow detainees reported that the men who died had been beaten in detention.

Founding member of the Unity for Democracy and Justice party (UDJ, a Medrek coalition partner and one of the offshoots of the CUD), Dr Yacob Haile-Mariam, was detained briefly and questioned on 16 June 2008 (*Awramba Times* 17 June). *Fitih* newspaper reported that **Ture Dio**, a supporter of the All Ethiopia Unity Organisation (AEUO), Hailu Shawel's faction of the former CUD, was **shot dead** by security forces in Dila Woreda, SNNPR, on 12 July 2008 and at least 40 others were detained in Walaita, Gamo and Kambata areas of SNNPR on 19 July.

Goggle reported on 31 October 2008 that AEUO leaders were again intimidated and detained in Walaita, SNNPR. Security forces broke into a local organiser's hotel and confiscated his National Election Board authorisation to move freely and his registration certificate. Two UDJ party organisers were arrested in Metu, Illubabor, on 30 October, according to the *Goggle* report.

Former judge, Ms Birtukan Mideksa, now 36, was elected chair of the UDJ and the party attracted most of the former, successfully-elected CUD members who had been detained in 2005. Birtukan was released in 2007 with most of the CUD detainees. However, after refusing to retract her clarification of the pardoning process which she gave at a conference in Sweden, Birtukan was again detained on 29 December and began her renewed life sentence in solitary confinement. She remains a prisoner of conscience and a focus of an Amnesty International campaign.

Crackdown on Oromo, October/November 2008: accusations of terrorism

Politicians, university lecturers, businessmen, lawyers, other professional people and students were arrested in October and November 2008 under the pretext of supporting the Oromo Liberation Front. Detainees included student and political activists and teachers of Oromo culture and language. Oromo who were successful in any sphere of activity and who refused to join the government Oromo party, the OPDO, were targeted, as in similar waves of detention of Oromo in 1997/8, 2002 and 2004.

OSG was informed about the detention of Wabe Haji Jarso, a lawyer working for the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, on 31 October. His story was typical. A relative in the USA wrote:

Ten Ethiopian federal security police went to Commercial Bank, where Wabe was a lawyer, and forced him to accompany them to his home in Saris. At least one other employee was also arrested from Commercial Bank. They spent 4 hours searching Wabe's house, without permission from the court. They confiscated all his photographs, several personal documents, a computer, DVDs, and a scanner. After they searched his house, the police took Wabe to Maikelawi Prison in Addis Ababa. His photograph was broadcast on the government run Ethiopian Television along with several other detainees on November 6. . . . All of those shown on Ethiopian Television were accused of being leaders of OLF who they say are organizing terrorist activities against the present government of Ethiopia. Wabe has no history of illegal activities in Ethiopia. However, he refused to join the OPDO.

Medrek coalition partners, the OFDM and OPC, reported that at least 94, probably more than 200, were detained in the two weeks following 30 October. Reports from HRLHA, OMHRO, the Oromo Parliamentarians Council (based in Belgium and formed by exiled Oromo members of Federal and Oromia Region parliaments), local press and individuals reporting the detention of colleagues and family members enabled OSG to compile the following list of 75 of the detainees:

Abdi Amade, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
Abdi Botu, imprisoned in Miliqayeti, Daro Labu, W. Hararge.
Abdi Mumade, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
Abdi Wallo, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
Abdul Aziz, Qilee village, W. Hararge, taken to an unknown location on 11 November.
Abdurahman Mohammed, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
Mr Abdusalam, Baroda town, Goro Gutu, W. Hararge, taken to an unknown location on 11 November.
Mrs Aberash Yadeta
Ahmed Mohammed Aliyi, detained in Ginir, Bale.
Aliyi Faxira, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
Mrs Asada Imana
Asafa Tefera Dibaba, poet, writer and lecturer in Oromo language studies, Addis Ababa University.
Banti Bula
Bayisa Hussein (Hinsene), High School student, Ambo.
Bayisa Lata, 28, Addis Ababa University student.
Bekele Jirata, 66, General Secretary of the OFDM, an agricultural expert with a Master's degree employed by Oromia Water Resources, was one of the first to be arrested, on his way to his office on Thursday 30 October. Chairman of the OFDM, Bulcha Demeksa, told *Sudan Tribune* on 5 November that Bekele had been held for six days without charge and without being allowed to see his family or a lawyer. Bulcha said at least 15 OFDM supporters were detained.
Bekele Negeri, businessman in Addis Ababa, held in Maikelawi CID
Belay Korme, pharmacist, Nekemte Hospital, Wallega.
Biratu Kabada, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
Ms Bizunesh, student, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.
Bulti Jalata, OFDM member, Mana Sibu/Qiltu Kara, Wallega, also detained and tortured in 2005, disabled from torture, property confiscated.

Chalsissa Abdissa
 Mrs Chaaltu, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
 Mrs Chaltu Takala
 Dastayo Dheressa Kaba, (Zegeye's brother, see below), 26, law graduate working in Ambo W. Showa, was reportedly taken earlier, on 15 September, and held in Maikelawi CID.
 Dejene Dhaba, trader.
 Dereje Borena, brother of Kebede Borena, below.
 Desalegne Qana'ii, lawyer representing political detainees, reported by HRLHA in December to have been released.
 Desta Kitil, businessman, brother of Eshetu Kitil, see below.
 Mrs Diribe (Bontu) Ittana
 Diribsa Legesse
 Duri Mohammed Galchu, imprisoned in Miliqayeti, Daro Labu, W. Hararge.
 Eshetu Kitil, 54, businessman and owner of the Hawi Hotel, Addis Ababa, held in Maikelawi.
 Fatiya Ahmed, wife of Harun Kabir Ibro below, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
 Fikadu Jalqaba, university/college student.
 Fikadu Nagari, teacher, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.
 Mr Getachew, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
 Getahun Dhuguma, University student (a professor, according to www.afro-o.org), detained in Nekemte, Wallega.
 Gudata Dabale, 48, High School Teacher and Director of Finance of the Macha-Tulama Association (Oromo welfare and self-help organisation whose members have been persecuted since its inception in the 1960s – including during the 1997/8, 2002 and 2004 arrests).
 Hailu Dalassa Mirkana, 27, from Ambo, W. Showa, 3rd year law student at Haromaya University, taken from campus 20 November to Kaliti prison and then Maikelawi.
 Harun Kabir Ibro, husband of Fatiya Ahmed, above, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November, property confiscated.
 Hussein Bultum, disappeared after being taken by security forces from his home in Metahara, E. Showa, on 30 or 31 October.
 Imiru Gurmessa, 70, businessman.
 Jara Ebissa, High School student, Ambo.
 Mr Jaafari, Baroda town, Goro Gutu, W. Hararge, taken to an unknown location on 11 November.
 Mr Johar, Fero village, Babile, W. Hararge, taken to an unknown location on 11 November.
 Kebebew Feyee
 Kebede Borena, an accountant and manager of Hilton Hotel, Addis Ababa.
 Kebede Bulti, businessman.
 Ms Lalisee Dhiphisaa, 33, a staff member for the recently closed Oromo program on Ethiopian Television.
 Mrs Lelise Wodajo, Ethiopian TV journalist, mother of three and wife of exiled TV journalist Dhabasa Wakjira, who was himself detained from 2004 to 2007.
 Mohammed Abdella Ahmad, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
 Mohammed Ali, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.
 Mohammed Amma, Ordee village, Cinqasqan, W. Hararge, taken to an unknown location on 11 November.

Mohammed Haji, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.

Mohammed Hawash, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.

Mohammed Sheeka, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.

Mohammed Tamam, student, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Namomsa Warqineh, school teacher, Bakejama, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Najash Awaday, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.

Nagari Fayissa, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.
Negusie Dhaba

Obsa Waqe, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Qajela Abdata, OFDM member, Mendi, Wallega, also imprisoned 1997-2003 and in 2005.

Qanate Barata, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Roba Gadafa, 27, statistician and employee of Hibret Insurance Company.

Sabit Abdurahman Ame, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.

Shiferaw Nagasso, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Shumi Dandana, High School student, Ambo.

Take Gamachu, student, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Taye Itana, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Mr Tofik, Dire Dawa, Hararge, detained 11 November.

Tokkon Mardasaa, OFDM member, Mana Sibu/Qiltu Kara, Wallega, also detained and tortured in 2005, disabled from torture, property confiscated.

Mrs Urge Ababa, her husband Girma, their three year old child and her brother, Dargu.

Wabe Haji Jarso, lawyer with Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (see above). Wabe had previously been detained for a short period.

Warqina Dhinsa, school teacher, Dembi Dollo, detained in Nekemte, Wallega.

Zegeye Dheressa Kaba, 24, from Matakal, W. Oromia Region, 3rd year law student at Bahar Dar University, taken on 7 November and reportedly held at Maikelawi CID.

Zerihun Wadajo, father of four, famous Oromo singer, detained under the Derg and detained, harassed and intimidated frequently since 1992. He was arrested on 14 November and held in Maikelawi CID.

Other staff members and students of Addis Ababa University were detained according to HRHLA but their reporter was unable to ascertain their identities due to tight security on the AAU campus. Staff of the Finca'a Sugar Factory and three human rights reporters for the Ethiopian Human Rights Council in Nekemte (EHRCO), Wallega, were also among those detained.

Amnesty International (AFR 25/01/2008, 14 November) reported that detentions had occurred across Oromia Region and that most detainees were held incommunicado at Maikelawi Central Investigation Department, 'known for torture and other ill-treatment of political prisoners in the past'.



Lelise Wodajo and two of her three children

The Oromo Parliamentarians Council reported on 16 November that arrests were still occurring across Oromia – in Addis Ababa, Bedano, Burqa, Kurfa, Calle, Gurawan, Metta, Gedo, Nekemte and Finca'a. They and OMHRO (17 November) also reported that the following **13 civilians were killed** by security forces in Sanbato district, Wollo zone:

Abba Adam
Adama Umer Kubi
Aliyi Muhe
Husuu Aliyi
Jaara Amadee
Mohammed Dina
Mohammed Usee Ali
Mussa Mohammed
Rahammad Abdulla
Saalih Buba
Umaru Ahmed Ali
Umer Buba Umaru
Usee Amada Usee

On 8 December, OMRHO reported more detentions in Golo Oda district of E. Harage. Villagers of Gara Gaafa and Dimtu, in Cabi area, were taken to Burqa prison. They included the top government security official in the area, Abdi Mahadi, and:

Ahmed Saido
Aliyi Mussa
Aliyi Tuke
Ibrahim Ahmed Kadir
Ibrahim Aliyi
Siraj Ahmed, student
Tajudin Sheik Ibrahim

An unknown number of those who were detained in the first two weeks of the crackdown, including the three EHRCO activists in Nekemte, were released within a few weeks. Others appeared repeatedly in court when hearings were adjourned at the request of the police in order for more evidence to be collected. A police request on 24 November for a third adjournment of two weeks was refused and 53 who appeared in court that day returned to court one week later.

However, it was not until 15 December that sixteen of the 53 detainees were charged. The sixteen included eleven of those named above – Aberash Yadeta, Bayisa Hussein, Bekele Jirata, Bekele Negeri, Dejene Dhaba, Dereje Borena, Eshetu Kitil, Kebede Borena, Lelise Wodajo, Roba Gadafa and Wabe Haji Jarso. It is not clear from reports whether three of the five others who were charged were detained during the October crackdown or before:

Bogale Mossissa Legese, student
Haile Dalassa Hundisa, student (possibly the student named Hailu Dalassa Mirkana, above)
Olana Jabessa Jaalu, graduate of Police College and a colonel in the police force.

Refoulement from Kenya: terrorist label

The most surprising inclusions in the 16 on the December 2008 charge sheets were the two individuals who headed list – Tesfahun Chemed and Mesfin Abebe. These former civil engineers were last heard of in Nairobi, where they were seeking protection with UNHCR. They disappeared from Nairobi in 2007. Human rights defenders in Nairobi believed that they had been abducted by Ethiopian security men and/or by Kenyan police in cooperation with the Ethiopian embassy. Their location was not known to their families for two years.

HRLHA reported that the 16, who were being held in Maikelawi CID, were charged with at least 11 offences, described in a 38 page document, including causing deaths and damage to properties by explosions in Addis Ababa, as part of their involvement in a network of opposition groups named 'Network 123' or 'Hawi Bilisuma'. According to the Addis Ababa based *Reporter*, 17 December, the defendants were accused by the Federal Court Prosecutor of belonging to OLF cells and raising funds for the organisation since 2003. Other detainees, including singer Zerihun Wadajo, were charged with less serious offences.

State-owned media pre-empted the court hearings. After warning of a crackdown on a terrorist plot and appeals for public cooperation and vigilance one day earlier, on 5 November, Ethiopian Television paraded detainees on the screen and reported that incriminating material, including weapons and a 7,000 page OLF document, were found at the time of the arrests. Viewers were informed that the Joint Taskforce of the National Intelligence Security Service and the Federal Police had detained OLF leaders who were plotting terrorist attacks in the capital and recruiting and arming terrorists. Legal opposition political parties, OFDM and OPC, were used as a front for these activities according to the Joint Taskforce, and it called for these parties to expel members who were 'engaged in dismantling the constitution'.

The taskforce also announced that members of a militant Islamic group, with links to the OLF, named 'Kawerj' or 'Kaworja' according to reports, had also been arrested for plotting terrorist activities in the capital. The day after parading detainees on television, state media reported the killing of a 'terrorist leader' in Wallega, who had been responsible for recent explosions in Addis Ababa.

Government spokesman, Bereket Simon, told *Reuters* (3 November 2008) that OFDM General Secretary Bekele Jirata was 'working hand-in-glove with terrorists' and 'it is proven he had links with groups like the OLF'. On 24 November, police told the Federal First Instance Court that he was involved in organising and training terrorists.

At their court appearance on 24 November, during which journalists were forbidden to take notes (*Reporter*, 26 November), defendants reported being denied access to their families and that they had been beaten and taken from their cells at night and tortured (Human Rights Watch, 27 November). Human Rights Watch called for the release of the 53 defendants because of the serious risk of torture.

More killings and arrests: new ‘silent torture’

Two Oromo in Saqata, W. Hararge, were **shot dead** by security forces on 1 December 2008, according to a news report from the OLF (15 December). They included an Oromo elder, **Ahmed Adam**, aged 68. Both victims were accused of supporting the OLF.

HRLHA reported on 15 January 2009 that 22 Oromo had been detained, including Sileshi Dagafa and Dechassa Merga Debelo, a 31 yr old university lecturer and Master’s student at Addis Ababa University. Dechassa was taken from his workplace at Rift Valley University College in Gullale, Addis Ababa, on 25 December. No warrant was served. Dechassa had previously been detained and tortured in 2004 when he was accused as an undergraduate of coordinating Oromo student protest against the government. His place of detention was initially kept from his family but they were informed he was being held at the Third Police Station (Maikelawi CID) when he was later taken by security forces to witness their search of his home.

Dechassa and Sileshi complained to the court that during detention they were interrogated daily and kept standing for up to 16 hours overnight. At least some of the defendants, including Dechassa, were eventually released on bail on 20 February.

The new ‘silent torture’ was used on other political detainees. HRLHA reported that the sixteen charged with OLF terrorist offences under the file of Tesfahun Chemedo and Mesfin Abebe, including Bekele Jirata, complained in court of being tortured by being made to stand for prolonged periods.

Political persecution and killings in 2009

January 2009: Killing, arrests, terrorism charges

HRLA reported on 15 January that businessman **Abadir Jamal**, 26, was **shot dead** by security forces in Masal district, Hararge on 4 January. Two other men, Dasi Mohammed and Abdi Maddi (a Somali from Wachale) were shot and severely wounded in a separate incident and taken to Imach hospital. Residents of Harar and Awaday began protesting in the streets at the killing of Abadir Jamal and ‘dozens’ were arrested.

In the same January press release, HRLHA reported that six farmers had been taken from different parts of Wallega on and around 7 October and detained in solitary confinement in Addis Ababa. The men, Gurricho Fida, Gaddafa Mosisa, Dame Qanno, Gammachu Birrasa, Tariku Raaga and Naga Berhanu had been held incommunicado, ‘on alleged political grounds’ 600 km from their families for over three months at the time of reporting.

The private weekly *Addis Admas* (24 January) reported that 18 members of an Islamic extremist group ‘Aarji Worji’, from Wollo, Wallega, Asosa, Silte and Jimma, under the leadership of Mukrim Gedu, were charged at the Second Criminal Bench of the Federal High Court on 21 January 2009. They were accused of arming 80 young men with weapons and bombs and training them in military camps.

According to *Reporter* on 28 January, a delegation of UDJ members, led by Dr Yacob Haile-Mariam, were arrested with about ten local party activists at Mersa, Amhara

Region, a few days previously. The group, which included local MP Birru Bermeja, were arrested for holding a meeting without permission and held briefly at the police station. On 27 January, *Mesenzeria* reported claims by UDJ's deputy chairman, Dr Hailu Araya, that the party's office had been closed in Boditi, SNNPR, by local government officials and that the office guard had been beaten.

Senior figure of the All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP) and chairman for North Gondar, Yared Girma, was detained with 67 others on 25 January, reported *Andinet* (1 February). Local officials and police beat people in the compound of his house and took one to prison during the previous evening, when he was not at home. All were charged with inciting disturbances during Timket celebrations.

February 2009: Torture, rape, harassment, arrests, death by torture

Reuters reported that Bekele Jirata was released 4 February on bail of 5,000 Birr. He told the private weekly *Fitih* (11 February) that he had been presented with no evidence against him and that books taken from his home at the time of his arrest had been returned. No other documents had been found at his home. He told the paper that on several occasions during his detention, he had been forced to stand for 14-17 hours, sometimes overnight.

On 20 February, the OLF released a list of 86 torture victims who had been detained for up to 12 years in prisons and detention camps throughout Oromia Region. Details of place, duration of detention and some of the injuries are given in Appendix 2. **Four** of the nine named female detainees had been **raped** in detention.

Agence France Press (AFP) reported, 26 February, UDJ party claims that its members were being threatened and arrested and that regional offices were being closed down and vandalised by local government forces. AEUP activist Addeye Anjullo was arrested on 23 February when delivering leaflets in Sodo, Walaita (SNNPR), and held until released on bail on 3 March (*Jimma Times* diaspora blog 28 August, reporting AEUP press release).

On an unspecified date in February, **Hassen Ibrahim Tule**, also known as Hassan Lakku, 57 yr-old businessman and father of seven, was **tortured to death**, according to HRLHA (Press Release 16, May 2009). The merchant from Tortora Guda, Bedeno, E. Hararge, was accused of involvement with the OLF. His car, tent, money and other possessions were confiscated by security forces. He had been detained on many occasions since 1992 on suspicion of supporting the OLF.

March 2009: Attempted assassination, killing, arrests

Wondimu Ibssa, OPC Member of Parliament, escaped an assassination attempt in his constituency, Dugda, Arsi, on 1 March (*Goggle* 13 March). Local police had not begun to investigate the incident two weeks later.

On 3 March, high school student **Wondimu Demena was shot dead** and two other OPC members injured when police opened fire during a disturbance at Gedo high school, W. Showa (*Addis Admas* 7 March). Local MP, Dejene Tafa (OPC), said that the students were complaining about racist literature brought to the school, and high fertiliser prices

and taxes imposed on farmers. OSG was informed separately that 25 teachers and students were detained during the unrest, including:

- Dinqa Kumisa (taken to hospital after beating)
- Ababa Shifera, teacher
- Biranu Dirriba, teacher
- Rabuma Gutu, teacher
- Tamiru Tunnee, teacher
- Fiqadu Banja, teacher
- Teferi, school employee

April 2009: Terrorism charges and convictions, Birtukan Mideksa

Bekele Jirata and another defendant who had been released on bail (see Crackdown on Oromo, October/November, p. 4) appeared with the other 14 defendants at the Third Criminal Bench of the Federal High Court on 14 April, only to be told that the hearing was again adjourned because prosecution witnesses had not turned up. According to private weekly *Ethio-Channel* (15 April), they were charged with recruiting for the OLF in Kenya, running military training camps and, as were the ‘Kawerj’ group, with planting bombs in Addis Ababa (see Refoulement from Kenya: terrorist label, p. 9). *Ethio-Channel* also reported that Zeleke Kibebew and Major Kemberere were found guilty by the Second Criminal Bench and sentenced to four years imprisonment for communicating with the OLF. Nine other defendants were found guilty and sentenced *in absentia*. Four others were found guilty on 15 April and given sentences of 12 years to life for terrorist offences (*Ethio-Channel* 18 April).

After 15 weeks detention, UDJ leader Birtukan Mideksa was granted permission to receive visits from family and friends on 15 April by court order, but the condition of solitary confinement was not lifted and the Federal Police Commission did not comply with lifting the visitor restrictions for at least another month (*Addis Admas* 18 April and 30 May).

Ginbot 7 arrests

Following Dr Berhanu Nega’s formation of the Ginbot 7 group and his exhortation for followers to overthrow the Ethiopian government by any possible means, about 35 were arrested on 24 April, amid claims that weapons, explosives, satellite and radio communication equipment and military uniforms were found at their homes. The group is named after the date of the 2005 national election (15 May) when CUD politician Berhanu Nega was elected Mayor of Addis Ababa. He was detained alongside more than 100 CUD members and has lived as an academic in the USA since his pardon and release in 2007. *State Media* and *Voice of America* radio (27 April), *Sendek* (29 April) and *Reporter* (3 May) reported that the group consisted of a military wing, led by Brigadier-General Terefe Mamo and staffed by members of the Ethiopian armed forces, and a civilian wing, led by another former CUD detainee and now high-ranking UDJ official, Melaku Tefera, and staffed by government and private organisation employees.

Members of the police, army and air force were among those arrested, including Brigadier-General Asaminew Tsige, Colonel Fantahun Muhabe, Lieutenant Azeze, Major Adamu Getinet, Major Sisay Aberra, Lt.-Colonel Demissew and Captain Mohammed Jemal Abamecha. Tsige Habte-Mariam, the 80 yr-old father of exiled former CUD

politician Andargachew Tsige, was among the detainees. He is diabetic and recently had heart surgery (Amnesty International Press Release, 5 May). A cousin of Berhanu Nega, Getu Worku was also among those detained, according to Amnesty International. Berhanu Nega's parents' home was surrounded by security forces and their phones confiscated. Detainees also included former judge, Goshu Yirad Tsegaw, who, with Birtukan Mideksa, had presided over the trial for corruption of former TPLF central committee member, Siye Abraha (*Addis Neger* 9 May and 13 June).

On 2 May, *AFP* reported that 40 had been detained and *Reporter* 6 May wrote of the brief detention of Ayne Tsige, the sister of Andargachew Tsige, and wife of Minister of Capacity Building, Tefera Walwa. She had protested to police who were arresting her elderly father.

Amnesty International wrote that the detainees were believed to be held at Maikelawi CID.

May 2009: Detention, killings, death from torture, CUD sentences

Sileshi Belay, an OPC elected member for Horo Guduru in the Oromia Regional Council, was detained for ten days in Shambu, Wallega (*Mesenazeria* 19 May). He had only been released for a few weeks since his detention for three years on charges of inciting riots after the 2005 election demonstrations.

Two AEUP members in Eastern Bellessa Woreda, **Gezat** and **Shambel Admassu**, were **killed** by local security forces on 13 and 18 May respectively, according to the AEUP (*Jimma Times*, Oromo diaspora blog, 28 August).

HRLHA (Press Release 16, May 2009) reported **torture leading to the death of Abdurashid Ibrahim Adam** on 8 May. The 38 yr-old farmer was held in Burqaa Tirtiraa prison in E. Hararge and subjected to repeated whipping and beating while suspended upside down with arms and legs tied behind him, because of his suspected involvement with the OLF. He was twice taken for medical treatment from the prison before he died.



Abdurashid Ibrahim Adam

The private weekly *Ethio-Channel* reported on 10 May that the cases against 55 CUD members, most of whom had been imprisoned along with the CUD leaders who were pardoned and released in July 2007, had been finally decided at the Federal High Court

on 8 May. All but one were found guilty of attempting to overthrow the constitutional system and sentenced to 3-18 years in prison.

June 2009: Beatings, Ginbot 7 charges, torture, tax evasion, terrorism

UDJ deputy chairman Dr Hailu Araya reported that party officials in S. Wollo, Amhara Region, had been beaten and harassed by security forces. Five victims were named in the *Awramba Times* report on 9 June.

The Federal Supreme Court named 46 defendants accused of intending to commit terrorist offences on behalf of Ginbot 7 (*Addis Neger* 13 June). Six were indicted *in absentia*, including Dr Berhanu Nega, four other former CUD leaders and former editors of Netsanet and Addis Zena newspapers. The remaining 40 included seven Federal Police Inspectors, Sergeants and Deputy Sergeants as well as the senior officers in the armed forces named above (p.12).

Reuters, 15 June, reported claims by relatives that the Ginbot 7 defendants had been tortured. One had to be treated in hospital for genital injuries, according to *Ethiopian Review*, 16 June. The lawyer acting for Getu Worku requested an independent medical report but was told that the prison doctor was sufficient. Brigadier-General Asaminew Tsige asked the court why he and four others were being kept in solitary confinement at Kaliti.

Ethiopian Human Rights Council chairman and former Supreme Court Judge, Abebe Worke, *Voice of America* radio journalist, Meleskachew Ameha, and two others were charged with evading duty on goods belonging to Addis Broadcasting plc., owned by Berhanu Nega, and appeared in court on 15 June. Meleschew Ameha had had his broadcasting license temporarily suspended earlier in the year because of government criticism of VOA. Although released on bail, they may face prison sentences if found guilty. (*EthioGuardian.com* 17 June, *Addis Admass* and VOA).

On 26 June, *Reuters* reported that three alleged OLF terrorists were arrested in Horo Guduru, Wallega, for beating Chinese workers at the Neshie Dam construction project and stealing office equipment and money. They were paraded on state television with guns, communications equipment and bomb-making materials.

July 2009: Anti-Terrorism Law

The Ethiopian government passed the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation on 7 July. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), 30 June, the proclamation could be used to ‘criminalize acts of peaceful political dissent’. Under the new law, a ‘non-violent march that blocked traffic could qualify as a terrorist act, subjecting protestors to 15 years to life in prison, or possibly even the death penalty’ wrote the organisation. A ‘group of two or more individuals who engage in peaceful political protest could be deemed a “terrorist organization” and membership deemed a crime, subject to 5-20 years “rigorous imprisonment”. . . . Someone who advised, or even just offered water and food to a political protester might find themselves charged with terrorism . . . [S]omeone who held a sign used in a non-violent political protest that blocked traffic could arguably be found guilty of possession of property used to commit a terrorist act.’

HRW declared that the proclamation ‘criminalizes speech ambiguously “encouraging,” “advancing,” or “in support” of terrorist acts even if there is no direct incitement to violence.’ ‘[E]ven someone merely voicing support for such a demonstration without participating—could be subjected to a 10-20 year prison term. . . . even a mundane newspaper article describing an Oromo student protest could be deemed “encouragement of terrorism.” . . . A journalist interviewing an opposition politician or a supporter of an armed opposition group could be deemed to be “encouraging” terrorism merely by publicizing the views of the interviewee.’

The proclamation ‘gives the police and other security services almost unlimited power to conduct body searches, and search or seize property based solely on the belief that terrorist activity “will be” or has been committed.’ Security services may intercept any form of communication, destroy property or restrict movement. The new law ‘grants the police the power to make arrests without a warrant, so long as the officer “reasonably suspects” that the person is committing or has committed a terrorist act’ and ‘sets new evidentiary standards for terrorism cases . . . that are far more permissive than the rules covering ordinary cases. Under these new rules, hearsay or “indirect evidences” can be admitted in court without any limitation. Official intelligence reports can also be admitted “even if the report does not disclose the source or the method it was gathered.” By making intelligence reports admissible in court even if the sources and methods are not disclosed, the law effectively allows evidence obtained under torture . . .’

Human Rights League: Oromo political prisoners’ appeal

On 25 July 2009, HRLHA published a document compiled by Oromo political prisoners entitled ‘Oromo Political Prisoners’ Plight and Appeal’. They wrote:

We, Oromo nationals from all walks of life - farmers, students, teachers, business persons, entrepreneurs, government employees, engineers, medical doctors, youths, elderly, men, women, children etc. brought from all over Oromia and accused of being either members or supporters of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) have been subjected to brutal tortures, ill treatments and very harsh prison situations imposed by the TPLF/EPRDF government of Ethiopia.

The report concluded:

We would like to inform everyone that this report is not all inclusive. Firstly, it does not reflect the whole reality of the current prison situations in most Ethiopian political prisons. Secondly, it doesn’t cover all, especially the secret and the unofficial prisons and detention centres where most Ethiopian political prisoners are held under the current regime. This is mainly due to lack of communication and very tight control over the exchange and flow of information. As a result, hundreds of political prisoners languishing in the same terrible prison situations in different places (for example Bahir Transit prison here in the capital, Mekele prison in Tigray) have not been included.

The document listed 110 prisoners who have been sentenced. Four, Sheik Ismael Muda, Ali Jemal (Aba Magal) and Ararsa Abba Humna from Hararge, and Fiseha Birassa from Wallega, have been sentenced to death and had already spent 16 years in detention by July 2009. Eleven have been sentenced to life imprisonment, 40 to 10-18 years, 32 to 5-9 years and the remainder to 1-4 years in prison. Their names, place of birth, sentences and time spent in prison are given in Appendix 3.

The prisoners' appeal listed 140 detainees who were awaiting sentence by the courts. These included the 16 who were charged on 15 December 2008, Mesfin Abebe and Tesfahun Chemedda who were subject to *refoulement* from Kenya, 11 who were rounded up in October 2008 and three others. A complete list of names, place of birth and duration of pre-trial detention is given in Appendix 4. Of these awaiting sentence, 111 had been in detention for one year or more, and 34 for two years or more by the time of the report in July 2009.

The prisoners reported that children, siblings and families were being held together with some of those listed in Appendix 4 as being held in pre-trial detention. Only those of the following who are marked with an asterisk * are listed: Atsedo Imana, 45 yrs old, from Addis Ababa, held with her two children Dereje and Seena Mulissa; 70 yr-old Qanno Shibo from W. Wallega, imprisoned with his son Dame Qanno; Tamiru Tafesse* from W. Wallega, held with his 66 yr-old father Tafesse Dafissa; siblings Qajela* and Obsa Banti* from W. Wallega; Jabeesa and Dastayew Deresse from Metekile; Sanbata and Mekonnen Chimdessa; Tafari Birassa* and his sister Alamitu Birassa; Diribe* and her brother Dagu Itana* from W. Wallega. Girma Ragassa* was imprisoned with his wife Urge Imana and their three yr-old child Bontu. 'These are very few of the numerous similar cases' wrote the prisoners.

Torture methods

The prisoners' report listed 29 among 'many other forms of torture' practised upon them 'by the Federal Police Crime and Forensic Investigation Main Division, National Security and Intelligence Service, and Federal Police Anti-Terrorist Task Force'. The full list, given in Appendix 5, included prolonged shackling in painful positions; beating, punching and whipping; suspension from pegs; beating of the soles of the feet and sensitive areas such as shins and genitalia; mouths being stuffed with filthy material; being forced to consume their own faeces and urine; suspension of weights from testicles (resulting in castration in one case); being forced to exercise, often naked, until collapse; walking over broken glass; sleep deprivation; needles being forced under fingernails; evulsion of fingernails; insertion of objects into female genitalia; electric shocks; mock execution with a pistol inserted into the mouth or being threatened with being pushed from high points ('usually Entoto Cliff'); being hit on the head and threatened with shooting while buried up to the neck; dry shaving of the head with glass or razor; prolonged lying naked on cold concrete floors, and; being forced to observe themselves being shot in the leg or hand.

At the end of the list, the prisoners wrote that any complaints about torture made by the prisoners in court were followed by 'severe punishments/torture, worse than the ones he or she complained about'.

Prison conditions

The report contained details of the harsh conditions in Kaliti prison – overcrowding, with hundreds crammed into single, poorly ventilated rooms, exposed to lice, fleas and TB, lack of sanitation, insufficient drinking and washing water, sleeping on cold concrete floors, almost no access to medical care, and 'complaints against all these human rights violations being severely punishable'.

Dozens of Oromo arrested: student tortured

On 1 August, HRLHA reported (in Press Release 18) that dozens of Oromo had been detained in a wave of arrests in the capital under the pretext of involvement with the OLF. HRLHA named the following three who were detained on 23 July:

Taye Danda'a Arado, 5th year law student at Addis Ababa University
Bayisa Dhaba Lata, employee of Dukam Municipality (Southern suburb of Addis Ababa)
Muse Ali, government employee

Another detainee, Zalaka Benya, was named later by the OLF (16 September).

Taye was an outstanding student who was due to graduate three days after his arrest and had been offered a teaching post at the university. He had been detained with Macha-Tulama Association members in early 2004 and had remained in detention for nearly three years, until released in late 2006. He had been a key figure in the university Oromo language society (the Afaan Oromo Club), was an active member of the Union of Oromo Students at the university and had been involved with the graduation ceremony and the Oromo Students Graduation Bulletin, which was not allowed to be published. He was taken from in front of the main university campus by plain-clothed security officers and held incommunicado with Bayisa and Muse at Maikelawi CID. *Ethiomed* reported on 6 October that Taye had been tortured and that his place of detention was no longer known.



Taye Danda'a Arado

August 2009: Convictions, arrests, torture, harassment

The Federal High Court reached a verdict on 14 of the 46 Ginbot 7 suspects on 6 August (*Reuters*, 8 August). One was acquitted and thirteen, including Dr Berhanu Nega, were found guilty.

The OLF reported (OLF News, 13 August 2009) that civilians in W. Hararge, especially in Daro Labu and Bookee districts, had been detained in reprisal for OLF activity in the area. The administrator of Biliqa village, Kamal Adam, and Bayisa, an elder from Tayfee village, were among those detained, alongside several farmers. The report also named Sham Mohammed and Taju Abdalla among several detained and tortured in Dire Dawa, E. Hararge.

On 18 August, the OLF reported detentions and torture in Xiyo, Digalu, Xijo and Muneesa districts of Arsi, naming Abdalla Fiqire, Mr Samuel, Abdalla Qumbo, Abbe Mohammed, Eliyas Kasaya, Mr Kadir, Qaalakiristosa Zamadu and a Mr Qancare and ‘all his family’ among those detained.

The OLF later reported (8 September) that Oromo in W. Showa had been arrested, dismissed from their jobs and denied educational opportunities for refusing to join the government Oromo party, the OPDO. Those detained in Jaldu district included Hailu Gobana, Dejene Tolasa, Birhanu Milkeesa and Kabee Xaafa. No attempt had been made to take these men to court two weeks later. The organisation also reported that three men, Tsfaye Boka, Haile Fulasa and Zeena Bachaara, who had been sentenced to life imprisonment in January 2009 for inciting student disturbances in 2005 were being severely tortured in Ambo prison, W. Showa.

On 23 August, *Capital* reported that the UDJ presented a report to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi which detailed abuses against party members. Its offices across the country had been shut down by local security officers and some had been demolished. Senior party members had been detained ‘on fabricated charges’, predominantly in SNNPR, Oromia and Amhara Regions. One member was detained for ‘posting a UDJ banner without permission’ said the acting chair, Gizachew Shiferaw.

On 29 August, *Ethio-Channel* reported that 25 university students, teachers and farmers were sentenced by the Federal High Court to 10-15 years in prison for suspected links with the OLF, damaging government institutions and robbing ‘millions of Birr from Fincha sugar factory’.

Former Ethiopian President and Medrek coalition partner, Dr Negasso Gidada, announced to the press at the end of August that government cadres disrupted a political meeting which he was addressing in Adama (Nazaret) in an ‘organised disturbance’.

September 2009: Pre-trial detention, Medrek and other arrests, torture

Bako Tibe Woreda (W. Showa) finance office employee, Mr Dabala, was arrested on 10 September and taken by security forces to an unknown location after his house had been searched in vain for evidence linking him with the OLF (OLF News, 16 September).

HRLHA (Press Release 19, September 2009) reported that 73 detainees, most of whom had been detained in Shinile, Dire Dawa, E. Hararge, for five years without charge or trial, were finally brought to court in September. Their names were taken from the Dire Dawa Prosecutor General's charge sheet which was presented to the Federal High Court in March 2009. According to HRLHA's informants, a number of prisoners had died in detention before the court hearing, due to lack of food and medical care. They receive only two glasses of water and three pieces of local bread each day. The survivors are aged 18-80 and include 9 women. All were charged with involvement with the OLF. Their names and ages are listed in Appendix 6.

Reuters and *AFP*, reporting from Addis Ababa on 10 September, published claims by Medrek coalition parties that they were being 'crippled by a campaign of arrests, imprisonments and intimidation'. The parties claimed that nearly 200 members had been arrested over the preceding three months. OFDM leader Bulcha Demeksa told reporters 'Ruling party cadres throughout the country are jailing our potential candidates on false charges'. Nine men were convicted that day and sentenced for 10-17 years for financing and buying weapons for the OLF. Bulcha Demeksa said 'The authorities plant documents in potential politicians' houses, trying to relate them to rebel groups like the OLF or the ONLF. They are simply potential candidates.'

Oromo singers Haacaaluu Hundasa and Ms Diribe Gada were arrested on 15 September and were reportedly tortured in Maikelawi CID, according to *Ethiomed*, 6 October.

OLF News reported on 29 September that family members Malkamu Ababa, Malkamu Tarafa and Bayisa Tarafa, were taken from their home in Addis Ababa earlier in the month and severely beaten in Maikelawi CID. Also mentioned in the report, in Fantalee Woreda, E. Showa, Dalale and Abdi Mi'eeso were among several Oromo detained on 24 September and tortured, and at least 110 were detained in W. Hararge on 28 September.

GSF, aged 25, writing from exile on 25 January 2010, recounted a five year history of persecution culminating in his last arrest in September 2009, before he fled the country. He was first arrested and tortured in Ambo police station for two months at the beginning of 2004, following student disturbances there. He was released on condition that he stopped attending the high school, avoided contact with other students and teachers and that he avoided all public meetings.

He went to Addis Ababa and joined the OFDM party. He was again arrested in November 2005. He remained in detention at Maikelawi, Karchale and then Kaliti until February 2009. During this period of more than three years he was shackled hand and foot for prolonged periods, whipped with electric cable, beaten severely by fist, boot and gun and accused of organising students on behalf of the OLF.

He successfully challenged a ten year prison sentence at the Federal Supreme Court to obtain his release. He was shot at by security forces around his family home in Wallega in June and again returned to Addis Ababa, where he was closely followed. He reported that a four day detention in September 2009 was the worst. After 'severe torture' he was taken out at 1.00 a.m. to Entoto mount to the north of Addis Ababa and threatened with a pistol inserted into his mouth to 'reveal OLF secrets' (see Torture methods, Oromo political prisoners' appeal, p. 16). He was again released on conditions; of avoiding personal, internet and telephone contact with anyone and of remaining within Addis Ababa. After hearing from a friendly Federal Security insider that he was being targeted for assassination, he fled the country at the end of 2009.

October 2009: UDJ members arrested, beaten, raped

The Amharic weekly *Addis Admas* (October 10) reported UDJ complaints of beating, harassment and intimidation of its members in East and West Gojam zone of Amhara Region. Deputy chairman Dr. Hailu Araya said that 21 members in Awenet Menz Kebele and Denbecha in Jabi Tena Woreda were targeted by local officials who accused them of illegal political activities following some of them attending a meeting in Addis Ababa. Three weeks later, the paper stated that another 20 UDJ members had given accounts at a meeting with western diplomats on 30 October of their being recently beaten and arrested in SNNPR and Amhara Region. One lady from S. Gondar, Amhara Region, reported being **raped in detention** three months previously.

Surveillance and intimidation in Dembi Dollo

Medrek coalition candidate, former Ethiopian President Dr Negasso Gidada (Ethioforum.org, 13 October) wrote of the harassment and intimidation that he and his supporters experienced when he visited his constituency in Dembi Dollo, Wallega, the previous month. His article is reproduced in full on the next page. As well as cataloguing reasons for the May 2010 national elections being unfair, he described in detail the structure and activities of the pervasive Ethiopian security apparatus. Operating down to the level of individual households, the security apparatus monitors any communication between opposition supporters (see also *Intense surveillance: Toronto Globe and Mail*, below). Meetings were disrupted and supporters followed and interrogated during and after his visit. Seventy five supporters were detained for up to 48 hrs prior to his visit and charged 100 Birr to be released on bail. They were warned that if they voted for the opposition as they did in 2005 the government party cadres would ‘not give in like then’ but defend themselves ‘even with guns’.

November 2009: Denial of food aid and food-for-work programme

Reuters (3 November) carried a report from opposition parties claiming that nearly 450 of their members had been jailed to prevent them standing as parliamentary candidates in the May 2010 election. On 17 November, the news agency wrote that UK Minister for International Development, Gareth Thomas, was investigating claims by the opposition coalition that their supporters were being denied emergency food aid (needed by 6.2 million this year) and access to the food-for-work scheme, the long-running programme helping another 7 million Ethiopians cope with food shortages.

Intense surveillance: Toronto Globe and Mail

Corroborating the account given by Negasso Gidada, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* (17 November) carried a report including interviews with him and with Bulcha Demeksa, OFDM leader, and Siye Abraha, former Defence Minister and colleague of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, also standing as an independant with the Medrek coalition. Negasso Gidada told the reporter ‘People are so intimidated that they are afraid even to speak to me on the phone. Campaigning is totally impossible. How can it be a fair election?’ He described a meeting being broken up by ‘dozens of thugs’ from the ruling party, police prohibiting the use of a megaphone because of the lack of a permit and the monitoring of his emails and phone calls.

Siye Abraha also claimed that he and his children were closely followed and that his emails and phone calls were monitored. 'In restaurants, spies sit close to me, and you can't ask them to leave' he said 'There is no private life, no private property. And there is nowhere you can complain. You can go to the police, but they will do nothing.'

Campaign letters have to be hidden from security informants. 'Families are afraid to pass the letters from one to another' claimed Bulcha Demeksa. He continued 'If tomorrow I go to my constituency and speak to people under a tree, the police will disrupt it.'

The paper quoted a recent International Crisis Group report 'Thanks to Chinese electronic monitoring-and-control software, the government is able to block most opposition electronic communications when it desires.'

December 2009: Ginbot 7 death sentences

Amnesty International (21 January 2010) appealed to the Ethiopian government to rescind death sentences passed on five of the Ginbot 7 defendants. Only one of those sentenced to death, Melaku Tefera, is detained in Ethiopia. The others, including Dr Berhanu Nega, are in the USA or UK. Sentences were passed on 22 December 2009. Life imprisonment was imposed on the 33 other Ginbot 7 defendants, including one woman.

No level playing field for the 2010 election - Dr. Negasso Gidada

Ethioforum.org 13 October 2009

Current Political Situation in Dembi Dollo Area

I visited Dembi Dollo, in Qelem Wallega Zone of Oromia Region from September 18-28, 2009. During my visit, I tried to gather as much information as possible on the current political situation. I was unable to hold public meetings because the local administration was unwilling to cooperate. I therefore tried to meet as many individuals as I could. During the 10 days, I talked to over two dozen individuals, including cadres of the OPDO/EPRDF, business leaders, community elders, government workers (teachers and health workers), local qabale* officials, vacationing university students, church leaders, private professionals, NGO employees and members and supporters of the OFDM.

This descriptive analysis summarizes and focuses on a few major issues. My general conclusion is that the OPDO/EPRDF totally controls and dominates the local political arena, and therefore, there could be no level playing field for the opposition in the Dembi Dollo area. Unless the situation changes dramatically in the next few months, I do not expect the 2010 election will be fair, free or democratic. The first step in correcting the current situation is by appointing well trained election officers to different levels of the election administration.

I. Strict Security Control and Surveillance

The OPDO/EPRDF which claims to have won the 2005 and 2008 elections seems determined not to allow any other political organization which could compete against it in the area. This goes as far as not welcoming individual visitors to the area. Visitors are secretly followed and placed under surveillance to determine where they have been, whom they have visited, and what they have said. The visitors would rarely be called for

interrogation or approached by the security people. It is the local people who had contact with visitors that are summoned and grilled by security officials. In my case, my brother-in-law, with whom I stayed, made a copy of the letter I brought with me from the parliament and gave it to the security office. He also received telephone calls from the Dembi Dollo and Naqamte* security offices. He was asked why I came, whether I came for preparation for the coming election or for any other purpose.

About two months ago Professor Haweitu Simeso of the USAID visited Dembi Dollo with colleagues from the Irish and Canadian embassies. The visiting group was followed from the time it arrived in Naqamte. After the group returned, several security officials interrogated leaders of the Dembi Dollo Bethel-Mekane Yesus Church who had spoken to Haweitu and his colleagues. One of the church leaders was even summoned to the zonal administrator's office and asked detailed questions about the visitors from Addis. Three weeks before I went to Dembi Dollo, Dr. Belaynesh (member of the OFDM and an MP) was in Dembi Dollo. After she returned to Addis, all the people who went to her father's house to greet her and others she greeted on the streets in the town were arrested, interrogated and held in custody for 24 to 48 hours. The houses of some of these individuals were also searched. A building contractor who arrived in Dembi Dollo on September 28 to inspect the construction of the new Bethel Church was also followed. He left the next day fearing that he will be summoned to the security office. OPDO/EPRDF in Dembi Dollo, besides using the police and security offices and personnel, also collects information on each household through other means. One of these methods involves the use of organizations or structures called "shane", which in Oromo means "the five". Five households are grouped together under a leader who has the job of collecting information on the five households every day and pass it on to a higher administrative organ called "Gare". There are 30 to 40 households in a "Gare" group which has a chairperson, a secretary, a security chief and two other members. The security chief passes the information he collected to his chief in the higher administrative organs in the Qabale, who in turn informs the Woreda police and security office.

Each household is required to report on guests and visitors, the reasons for their visits, their length of stay, what they said and did and activities they engaged in. The "shane" leader knows if the members of the households have participated in "development work", if they have contributed to the several fund raising programs, if they have attended Qabale meetings, whether they have registered for election, if they have voted and for whom they have voted. The OPDO/EPRDF runs mass associations (women, youth and micro-credit groups) and party cells ("fathers", "mothers" and "youth"). The party cells in the schools, health institutions and religious institutions also serve the same purpose.

II. Organizational Structures

Understanding how the OPDO/EPRDF itself and its Woreda administration are organized is very important. There is the OPDO/EPRDF Qellem Wallega Zonal office in Dembi Dollo. This office receives information and instruction from the regional office in Addis Ababa. It passes messages to the lower structures and oversees the propaganda and organizational activities of the party. This office has branches in every village, schools and health institutions. These branches are subdivided into basic cells. The branches of these cells are organized into supporter groups, candidate groups and full members groups.

Additionally, the party has organized the people into youth, women and micro-credit associations for tighter control and easy dissemination of its propaganda and to do party activities. Dembi Dollo town is a special Woreda Town Administration. The Administration is sub-divided into four large “Ganda” (villages). The town used to have seven Qabales but was restructured just before the Qabale election in 2008. Each Qabale has 15 in the Woreda Council. It is said that the OPDO/EPRDF presented the names of pre-selected council members to the Qabale Council and had them endorsed. There is also the Sayyo Rural Woreda (24 Qabales). The administration of Sayyo Woreda also has its seat in Dembi Dollo town. These are all appointees of the party and are believed to be “strongly committed” to it. The four “Ganda” (villages or some times called Kifle Ketema) have each their own councils. A council has 300 members. The members were “elected” in 2008. All the people I talked to confirmed to me that the party pre-selected the candidates. The Qabale has its own cabinet and these are also party members. A Qabale is further sub-divided into different zones. The zones are sub-divided into “Gare”. There are up to 17 “Gare” in each zone.

III. Misuse of Public Property, Finance and Civil Servants

The party’s propaganda and organization committees are located in the Zonal, Woreda and Qabale Administration building. The party does not pay rent for the rooms it uses. The committee members are party cadres but their monthly salaries and per diems are paid by the administration from public treasury. Their secretaries, cleaners and messengers also get their salary from public treasury. All civil servants are also members of the party. Monthly contribution of the members to the party are collected by the Woreda finance office at the time they pay the workers their monthly salaries. The party officials use government office materials, supplies and equipment, including official transport vehicles. The party uses town and qabale halls without paying rent. Meeting halls in health and educational institutions are also used without any payment and at will. This system is practiced from Zonal to “Gare” levels. But opposition to the OPDO/EPRDF are not allowed to rent rooms for offices from private owners or rent public halls in the town for meetings. Plasma televisions supposed to be used for school-net and Woreda-net are used for dissemination of party propaganda.

IV. Dissemination of OPDO/EPRDF thoughts

All adults in the qabales and government employees are forced to participate in different seminars and workshops. The same is true of all school children who are in high schools and vocational training institutions. University students on vacation are also required to participate in such programs. Lessons in “Tarsimo” (Strategy) and “Bulchiinsa Gaarii” (Good Governance) are given to all residents (school children, college and university students, and private and government employees). Workshops on BPR have been held and each government employee is given Birr 25 for participation. The seminar for university students lasted five days. The per diem for this seminar was supposed to be Birr 35 per day for each participant for nine days. Every two weeks on Friday afternoon, all government employees participate in study circles of the party and cell meetings during work hours and in the public meeting rooms. No rent is paid for the use of the rooms. Fund raising programs are organized once in a while for support of the party. It is the administration’s finance officers who deduct the pledged amount from employees and transfer the money to the party.

V. Elections

During the 2005 election, I have witnessed that civil servants were deployed for two weeks for election campaign for the OPDO/EPRDF and that government vehicles (cars and motor cycles) were used for this purpose. OPDO/EPRDF members and cadres were busy disrupting public meetings I called in the field. One of my observers was bribed with Birr 200 and agreed to give the votes I received to my opponent (OPDO/EPRDF). In one qabale, I was prevented from holding an election campaign meeting 500 meters away from a market place. The qabale officials told me that my meeting will disturb “their market”. My posters were removed from several places and leaflets I distributed were collected and destroyed. I persistently appealed to the election officials to correct the OPDO/EPRDF illegal activities or cancel it from the election in accordance with the election law but no one heeded my appeals.

According to the people I talked to, the chief of an election office during the 2008 election was also a member of the OPDO/EPRDF. There is a rumor that the same person is being appointed to the office by the OPDO/EPRDF for the 2010 election. The OPDO/EPRDF appointed a supporter or a member to each polling station to stand by the voters and tell the voters in which box they should put voting signs or signatures.

VI. Situation of the Opposition

The office of the OFDM has remained closed since 2005. Members and supporters were beaten up and imprisoned several times. They were intimidated or bribed. During the three weeks before my visit to Dembi Dollo, 60 people in Sayyo and 15 people in Dembi Dollo were arrested and kept in police custody for up to 48 hours. They had to pay one hundred Birr as bail before being released. They were reprimanded and warned for the 2010 election. They were told, “Be careful! Don’t support, or join or vote for the opposition as you did in 2005. We shall not give in like then. We defend ourselves even with guns.” OFDM is equated with OLF while the CUD or the “Qindomina” as it is called in Oromia, is equated with the “Nafxagna*”. The campaign against the UDJ as a “Nafxagna” organization has already begun.

VII. Media

No private or independent newspapers exist in Dembi Dollo. Alternative news sources to the Federal and Oromia public media are only *VOA* and *Deutsche Welle*. The Oromia information office and the OPDO send their press media to the area by bus. These are picked up by a government employee and distributed to different institutions and offices. All workers are forced to buy these news papers.

VIII. Conclusion

It is plain to anyone who has been to Dembi Dollo and surrounding areas that there is no political level playing field. I can not imagine how the opposition can enter into an election process under such conditions. If the ruling party is serious about having a peaceful, fair and democratic election in 2010 it has much to do, including the release of all political prisoners and putting a stop to new illegal arrests, intimidations, detentions and bribing opposition member, immediate reopening of offices of the opposition, providing immediate equal access to the public media, allowing public meetings

organized by the opposition to take place freely, amending the Election Law so that neutral election officials can be appointed and making it possible for international election observers free access to ensure fair elections, and putting into place control mechanisms so that its supporters and members respect the constitution and the election laws. It must also start repaying rent for offices and halls it has used for its party activities over the past several years as well as for use of government office materials and equipment, fuel, telephone and electricity, and return the money it took out of the public treasury and paid as salaries to its members

*Qabale = Kebele; Nafxagna = Nefteгна, a derogatory term, meaning ‘rifle-carrier’, used in reference to Amhara landlords who were imposed on Oromo peasants after the conquest of Oromia in the late 19th century.

Abbreviations & terms

AEUP	All Ethiopia Unity Party (offshoot of CUD)
Arena	Tigrean opposition party (Medrek member)
CUD	Coalition for Unity and Democracy, former opposition party
EDUM	Ethiopian Democratic Unity Movement (Medrek member)
EPRDF	Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front, umbrella government party
ESDP	Ethiopian Social Democratic Party (Medrek member)
Ginbot 7	Banned opposition movement
Maikelawi CID	The Central or Special Investigation Department in Addis Ababa, adjacent to the Third Police Station
Medrek	Coalition of opposition parties
OFDM	Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (Medrek member)
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front, banned in 1992
OPC	Oromo People’s Congress (Medrek member)
OPDO	Oromo People’s Democratic Organisation, government Oromo party
OSG	Oromia Support Group
SDAF	Somali Democratic Alliance Forces (Medrek member)
TPLF	Tigrean People’s Liberation Front, dominant party in EPRDF
UDJ	Unity for Democracy and Justice (offshoot of CUD, Medrek member)

The Oromia Support Group is a non-political organisation which attempts to raise awareness of human rights abuses in Ethiopia. OSG has now reported 4,185 extra-judicial killings, including deaths in custody, and 944 disappearances of civilians suspected of supporting groups opposing the government. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have been placed in illegal detention, where torture and rape are commonplace. Most of these detainees are Oromo.

Appendix 1. Names of 25 of the 157 Oromo People's Congress members and supporters who were arrested in mid-January 2010.

Name	Place of arrest	Occupation
Asfaw Tekle	Harato/Wallega	Student
Kenate Fayisaa	Harato/Wallega	Nurse
Tadala Kibirat	Harato/Wallega	Student
Irena Iticha	Ambo	MP, Oromia Region
Tadesse Irrensoo	Ambo	MP, Oromia Region
Abuu Gudata	Dugdaa/East Showa	Peasant
Ashe Gada	Dugdaa/East Showa	peasant
Bilisummaa Odaa	Dugdaa/East Showa	Student
Daraaraa Baqalaa	Dugdaa/East Showa	Teacher
Dhuga Miidhaqsoo	Dugdaa/East Showa	Teacher
Eshetu	Dugdaa/East Showa	-
Gabbisaa Dori	Dugdaa/East Showa	Finance officer
Ganate Qaqaboo	Dugdaa/East Showa	Peasant
Jirru Elemoo	Dugdaa/East Showa	Student
Ms Joorro Badhaasoo	Dugdaa/East Showa	Teacher
Qabeto Odaa	Dugdaa/East Showa	Peasant
Maaramaa Mulugeta	Dugdaa/East Showa	Teacher
Magarsa Bultoo	Aqaaqi/East Showa	Teacher
Tamirat	Odaaa Nabee/East Showa	Teacher
GamachuuBaqqalaa	Bishoftu/East Showa	Student
Bulbulaa Takaa	Bishoftu/East Showa	Student
Beekama	Haromaya University	Student (Computer Sciences)
Gaddisa	Haromaya University	Student (Computer Sciences)
Birhanu Abdiisaa	Nekemte /Wallega	Wallega University Student
Galgalu Getu	Nekemte/Wallega	Wallega University Student

Appendix 2. 86 Tortured detainees, reported by OLF, 20 February 2009

Name	Place	Yrs	Injuries
Central Oromia Region			
Abdalla Haji Ali	Karchale	5	
Abdulkadir Haji Wabe	Asella	8	
Abdulkadir Mohammed	Jijjiga, Dire Dawa, Karchele	5	Facial and dental injuries
Abdullahi Musa Ahmad	Hurso, Zeway, Karchele	7	
Abdulnasir Tibeso Sadu	Bilate	3	
Abdurazak Ahmad Hassan	Hurso, Zeway, Karchele	11	
Abera Yeshitila Feyisa	Hurso, Zeway, Karchele	12	
Abu Gemechu Badaso	Asella	2	
Alemayehu Geleta Shogo	Karchele	6	
Asefa Legesse	Maikelawi, Shewa Robit, Kerchele	3	Left hand injured
Ms Deressa Roba	Zeway	3	Hand amputated

Gezaign Bekele	Addis Ababa	2	Fractures in right hand
Hangatu Balcha	Sankalle	2	
Hussein Mohammed Ahmed	Bilate	2	
Dr. Jemal Mohammed Gemta	Hurso, Zeway, Karchele	5	
Kedir Ibrahim Ahmed	Hurso, Zeway, Karchele	12	
Khalif Zakir Musa	Bedeno, Zeway, Karchele	9	
Ms Lelise Roba Gelma	Karchele	2	Left leg badly injured
Moh'd Abdurahiman Umer	Hammarressa, Zeway	3	
Muhammad Abdulla Ahmad	Hurso, Zeway, Karchele	12	
Omer Ibro H/Ahmed	Zeway	8	
Omer Sani Mohammed	Zeway	3	Amputated left hand
Ramadan Moh'd	Zeway, Shinille, Karchele, Maikelawi	5	Leg and back injured
Rashid Sheikh Hisak	Zeway	5	
Rasimo Fite Yadete	Zeway	9	
Shamil Aliyi Mohammed	Zeway, Karchele	8	Ribs broken
Sori Sinyor Deresa/Aresa	Zeway	7	Paralyzed hand
Wendimu Feyisa Sida	Zeway	5	
Yesuf Abdi Ahmed	Hammaressa, Zeway	3	
Yusuf Ismael	Dire Dawa, Maikelawi, Karchele	7	
Yusuf Uso Mumad	Shinille, Zeway, Karchele	7	
East Oromia Region			
Abadir Ashim Abdulahi	Hurso	6	
Abdalla Bekri Omer	Asebe Teferi	4	
Abdi Husen Ibrahim	Goba	6	
Abdo Adam Bati	Dallo	2	
Abdulkadir H/Mohammed Hassan	Goba	3	
Ahmad Nedi Aliyi	Hurso, Harar, Dire Dawa	3	Back injury Ahmad
Yusuf	Kombolcha, Hurso, Zeway, Karchele	10	
Ahmad Yusuf Osman	Harar	9	
Ahmed Kamir Aliyi	Goba	2	
Anwar Umer Abdul-Shaker	Goba	4	
Araarsaa Lammi	Qore, Dire Dawa	7	Left hand injured
Awal Mohammed Dube	Goba	6	
Beker Mama Bati	Goba	3	
Burka Kadir Harka	Goba	5	
Farhan Yusuf Musa	Goba	5	
Feyisa Omar Hassan	Goba	5	
Genemo Roba Sheko	Agarfa	2	
Hangatu Bati Imana	Galamsso	5	
Hassan Aliyi Bati	Goba	1	
Ms Hayat Shamsudin	Deder, Dire Dawa, Maikelawi	6	Raped and tortured
Ibrahim Mohammed	Ginnir	2	
Ismail Baker Weday	Dire Dawa	3	
Jemal Hassen Hussein	Dire Dawa	3	

Jemal Idris Mohammed	Asebe Teferi	2	
Jeylan Kedir Bati	Goba	5	
Jeylan Taba Kamiso	Hurso, Agarfa	4	
Kassim Sheiko Lole	Goba	4	Deafness
Ms Mariam Hamu Nure	Goba	4	Hand injury
Mohammed Ahmed Omar	Harar	3	
Mohammed Dadi Tuke	Dire Dawa	7	
Mohammed Ismail Kabira	Hurso	4	
Mohammed Jundi	Jijiga, Haromaya	2	
Mohammed Mahmud Omer	Gurawa	2	
Mohammednur Adam Butta	Goba	4	
Ramadan Mohammed	Dallo	2	
Ms Safia Abdulrahman	Harar	1	
Shamsudin Ibro	Machara, Gelamso	5	Neck and hand injuries
Shamsudin Ibro Osman	Harar	4	
Sultan Mohammed Siraj	Harar	4	
Tofik Suleiman Ahmed	Dire Dawa	5	
Umar Ibro H/Ahmed	Zeway, Dire Dawa, Hurso, Galamso	9	
Wakoya Goshu	Hurso	1	Hand and leg injuries
Yibeltal Alemayehu Balata	Harar	7	
Ms Zeinaba Jamal	Dire Dawa	1	Broken leg
South Oromia Region			
Ms Annane Ittana	Hidi Lola	2 months	Raped
Ms Dhakki Sorsa	Mega	8 months	Raped and beaten
Kuyu Obsa Betera	Negele	2	
Ms Loko Dullacha	Yabello	2	Raped and tortured
West Oromia Region			
Alemayehu Idosa Ayana	Shambu	2	
Ifa Jiregna Tisa	Didessa	8	
Negewo Bullo	Didessa	3	
Yohannes Wakbulcho	Didessa	2	
Zakir Sharafudin Hussein	Jimma	4	
Zelege Kenate	Didessa	6	Leg injury
Tigray Region			
Mohammed Yasin	Mekele	3	Left leg injured and mentally ill

Appendix 3. Sentenced Oromo prisoners, compiled by prisoners and reported by HRLHA, 25 July 2009.

Name	Place of Birth	Penalty	Duration in prison (years)
Ali Jamal (Aba Magal)	Hararge	Death	16
Ararsa Abba Humna	Hararge	Death	16
Fiseha Birassa	West Wallega	Death	16
Sheik Ismael Muda	Hararge	Death	16
Abdurreshid Abdullah	Hararge	Life imprisonment	9
Cherinet Yemaneh	West Wallega	Life imprisonment	8
Daniel Ayana	West Wallega	Life imprisonment	8
Dula Moti	West Showa	Life imprisonment	3
Mengistu Hordofa	West Wallega	Life imprisonment	8
Mesfin Etana	West Wallega	Life imprisonment	8
Mitiiku Tadefa	West Wallega	Life imprisonment	8
Mohammed Hussein	Bale	Life imprisonment	9
Said Hasseen	Wollo	Life imprisonment	1.6
Sherif Jundi	Hararge	Life imprisonment	9
Teshale Shiferaw	East Wallega	Life imprisonment	2
Ayantu/Bachu Tola	West Wallega	18 years	2
Badhassa Tola	West Wallega	18 years	2
Feyissa Alemayehu	West Showa	18 years	3
Negassa Alemayehu	West Showa	18 years	3
Abdulselem Anubeker	Bale	17 years	3
Girma Shibiru	East Showa	16 years	2
Talila Robale	East Showa	16 years	2
Galata Kamiso	West Wallega	15 years	3
Abdi Hussen	Wollo	13 years	1.2
Adugna Magarssa	West Showa	13 years	3
Shurube Amesso	Sidama	13 years	2
Zenebe Mengesha	East Showa	13 years	3
Awal Abba Bulgu	Jimma	12 years	2.6
Gamada Qasim	Bale	12 years	6
Indris Adem	Wollo	12 years	1.2
Said Mohamod	Wollo	12 years	1.2
Firanbon Mohamod	Arsi	11 years	3
Abdi Ahimed	Hararge	10 years	1.8
Abdissa Ifa	West Showa	10 years	3
Abishu Tenshu	East Showa	10 years	4
Adem Gariso	Arsi	10 years	3
Adem Mohamod	Hararge	10 years	3
Ahimed Kedir	Bale	10 years	3
Alemu Belay	West Showa	10 years	2
Ashenafi Adugna	West Showa	10 years	3
Ashenafi Gari	West Showa	10 years	4
Ayana Tesfaye	Arsi	10 years	2.6
Chaluma Mengistu	West Showa	10 years	3
Gadissa Ararssa	East Wallega	10 years	2.6
Galiso Abbabor	Jimma	10years	1.2
Gemechis Megarssa	West Wallega	10 years	2.6

Jamal Abdelah	Jimma	10 years	10 months
Kemal Abdellah	Hararge	10 years	3.6
Mamush Tesfaye	Arsi	10 years	3
Murad Ashim	Hararge	10 years	2
Nuguse Hamu	Arsi	10 years	3
Sangni Bakalcha	West Showa	10 years	3
Sharif Ibrahim	Jimma	10 years	1
Tadesse Fufa	West Showa	10 years	3
Ziyad Hussen	East Showa	10 years	4
Adugna Misgana	East Wallega	8 years	2.6
Bahilu Belew	West Showa	8 years	2.5
Abbas Hussien	Bale	7 years	3
Abdissa Hirphasa	West Showa	7 years	3
Abebe Fana	West Showa	7 years	2.8
Abera Nedha	West Showa	7 years	2.4
Biso Dhaaba	West Showa	7 years	3
Getachew Yigezu	West Showa	7 years	3
Mahmod Jamal	Hararge	7 years	3
Shimelis Tefaye	West Showa	7 years	2.4
Tarekegn Wagari	East Wallega	7 years	3
Zerihun Kassa	West Showa	7 years	2.4
Bigiga Gadissa	West Showa	6 years	2.4
Bontu Shugi	West Showa	6 years	3
Chala Robi	West Showa	6 years	2
Dereje Kefana	West Showa	6 years	3
Getu Kebebew	West Showa	6 years	2
Mohamod Tusa	Arsi	6 years	2.4
Tolassa Dabusha	West Showa	6 years	2.5
Tujuba Legesse	West Showa	6 years	2.5
Alemayehu Demisse	East Showa	5 years	6 months
Bati Edossa	West Showa	5 years	2.4
Bira Marga	Arsi	5 years	2.4
Daniel Bulti	West Wallega	5 years	2.4
Firehun Abebe	East Wallega	5 years	3
Gabi Nabi	Bale	5 years	2
Hiko Bukullo	Arsi	5 years	2
Jamal Argo	Bale	5 years	2
Nuredin Hussen	Arsi	5 years	3
Ms Rukiyya	Arsi	5 years	2.6
Ms Warite Hussen	Arsi	5 years	2.6
Wariso Terefe	Arsi	5 years	2.4
Adrselam Abbabor	Jimma	4 years	1.2
Amin Hussen	Wollo	4 years	2.6
Hussen Gesso	Bale	4 years	2.4
Hussen Musa	Arsi	4 years	3
Jamal Abdelah	Borana	4 years	2.4
Jambere Tessema	Finfinnee	4 years	1
Kidane Gurmessa	Illubababor	4 years	3
Solomon Ligdi	Illubabor	4 years	3
Zelege Kebebew	East Wallega	4 years	1
Ahimed Hussen	Bale	3 years	2
Ashabir Siyum	West Wallega	3 years	3 months
Dessalegn Dersse	West Wallega	3 years	1

Mohamod Abba Tamam	Jimma	3 years	2
Tesfaye Yaze	West Showa	3 years	3
Abdo Abbamacha	Jimma	2 years	1
Ashebir	West Wallega	2 years	1
Ismael Usman	Jimma	2 years	1.2
Mohammed Abbanaga	Jimma	1 year	6 months
Reshid Abbzeneb	Jimma	1 year	6 months
Tola Chaliwa	Jimma	1 year	6 months
Yusuf Kemal	Bale	Not recorded	3

Appendix 4. Oromo prisoners awaiting sentence, compiled by prisoners and reported by HRLHA, 25 July 2009.

Name	Place of Birth	Duration in prison
Abara Daka	West Wallega	1 year
Abdi Adem Yusuf	Hararge	2 years
Abdi Mohammed	Hararge	6 months
Abdi Shayi	Hararge	6 months
Abdurahman Usher	Hararge	6 months
Abdurahman Abba Macha	Jimma	1 year
Abdureshed Bershir	Hararge	6 months
Abdurahman Adem	Hararge	2.5 years
Aberash Yadata	Finfinnee*	1 year
Addisu Ashebir	West Wallega	1.8 years
Addisu Getachew	East Wallega	1.8 years
Ahimed Ibriham	Hararge	6 months
Ahimed Usman	Illubabor	1 year
Alamu Fikadu	East Wallega	1.8 years
Ali Ahmed		2.4 years
Aliy Mume	Hararge	6 months
Amanuel Getachew Duressa	West Wallega	10 months
Ms Arare Borana	East Wallega	1.8 years
Asham Adam	Hararge	2 years
Assefa Mulata Garara	Finfinnee*	1 year
Ayana Kadida	West Wallega	1.8 years
Bakar Mohammed	Hararge	6 monts
Bayisa Bacha	West Showa	2.4 years
Bayissa Hussen	West Showa	1 year
Bekele Negeri	Finfinnee*	1 year
Belay Abera	East Wallega	1.4 years
Berkeka Zewude	North Showa	2.4 years
Birhanu Adugna	West Showa	10 months
Birhanu Gebeyehu	East Wallega	1.8 years
Bogale Mosisissa	Southwest Showa	1 year
Chala Itana	West Wallega	2.4 years
Ms Chaltu Tekele Abetu	East Wallega	1 year
Daba Rafissa	East Wallega	1.8 years
Dabala Magarsa	West Wallega	1 year
Dabala Tafa	North Showa	2.4 years
Dachasa Ararsa	East Wallega	1 year

Daraje Imana	East Wallega	1.4 years
Dagu Itana	West Wallega	1 year
Dasta Jaldu	East Wallega	1.8 years
Dawit Milkessa	Jimma	1 year
Dejene Dhaba	Finfinnee*	1 year
Desalegn Debelo	East Wallega	1.8 years
Dilbetigil Sahilekalu	Bale	6 months
Diriba Dheressa	East Wallega	1.8 years
Diriba Feyissa	North Showa	2.4 years
Ms Diribe Itana	West Wallega	1 year
Ebbisa Nagawo	West Wallega	1 year
Edossa Degefa	West Wallega	2 years
Efrem Dhaaba	West Wallega	1 year
Efrem Likissa	West Wallega	2 years
Eshetu Asseefa	Finfinnee*	2.4 years
Eshetu Kitil	Finfinnee*	1 year
Etefa Dheressa	North Showa	2.4 years
Faysil Amin	Arsi	2.5 years
Fikadu Hunde	North Showa	2.4 years
Firdissa Dheressa	East Wallega	1.8 years
Firew Abebe	East Wallega	2.4 years
Gamachis Abaya	West Wallega	1 year
Gamula Birassa	West Wallega	2 years
Garoma Jaldu	East Wallega	1.8 years
Geleta Beza	West Showa	10 months
Getachew Tolina	West Wallega	1 year
Gezahagn Ragassa	Finfinnee*	2.4 years
Girma Daba	West Wallega	2 years
Girma Gabissa	Wollo	2.4 years
Girma Ragassa	West Wallega	1 year
Gutama Garoma	East Wallega	1.8 years
Habtamu Fikadu	West Wallega	1 year
Habtamu Dasse	East Wallega	1.8 years
Hailu Delessa	West Showa	1 year
Hassen Mohammed	Wollo	6 months
Huseen Haji Beker	Hararge	6 months
Hussein Haji	Hararge	1.3 years
Hussein Mohammed	Hararge	1 year
Hussen Mohammed	Wollo	6 months
Hussen Abdallah Ahimed	Hararge	6 months
Hussen Mohammed Sultan	Wollo	1 year
Indale Nagari	West Wallega	1 year
Jabir Mohammed	Hararge	6 months
Jafar Mohammed	Hararge	6 months
Jamal Abdallah	Hararge	1.8 years
Jamal Mume	Hararge	6 months
Jeylan Sali	Arsi	2 years
Kebede Borana	Finfinnee*	1 year
Kebede Girma	West Showa	6 months
Keno Shibo	West Wallega	1 year
Ms Lelise Wodajo	Finfinnee*	1 year
Lelissa Choman	East Wallega	1.8 years
Lelissa Iticha	West Showa	2.4 years

Lelissa Nano	West Wallega	1.3 years
Major Olani Jabessa	Finfinnee*	1 year
Malkamu File	East Wallega	1.8 years
Mangistu Waquma	East Wallega	9 months
Matiwos kitessa	West Wallega	1 year
Mesfin Abebe	East Wallega	2 years
Messeret Tadesse	Finfinnee*	2.4 years
Misgana Diribsa	West Showa	2.4 years
Mohammed Ahimed	Illubabor	1 year
Mohammed Ahimed	Wollo	1 year
Mohammed Asehi	Hararge	6 months
Mohammed Awal	West Wallega	1.3 years
Mohammed Dadi	Arsi	6 months
Mohammed Ibrahim Kedir	Jimma	6 months
Mohammed Said	Hararge	6 months
Moti Kumala	West Showa	2.6 years
Najib Usman	Jimma	1.2 year
Nimona Tilahun	East Wallega	10 months
Obsa Banti	West Wallega	2 years
Qajela Banti	West Wallega	1.3 years
Roba Degefa	North Showa	1 year
Sofian Adurahman	Hararge	1.2 year
Solomon Buzune	North Showa	2.4 years
Tadesse Belay	Arsi	2.4 years
Tadesse Degeffa	Finfinnee*	2.4 years
Tafa Dakisissa	West Showa	2 years
Tafari Birassa	West Showa	10 months
Tahir Haji	Bale	6 months
Tamiru Hanbissa	West Wallega	1 year
Tamiru Jimma	North Showa	2.4 years
Tamiru Tafesse	West Wallega	1 year
Tareesa Safara	East Wallega	1.8 years
Tarekegn Desalegn	East Wallega	1.8 years
Tariku Arega	West Wallega	1 year
Tariku Qabata	West Wallega	1.8 years
Teferi Beyene	East Wallega	1.8 years
Temesgen Qansi	East Wallega	1.8 years
Tesfa Amanu	East Wallega	1.8 years
Tesfahun Chemedda	East Wallega	2 years
Tesfaye Garedeu	West Showa	11 months
Tesfaye Negara	East Wallega	10 months
Teshome Qabata	West Showa	1 year
Toloba Sibru	West Wallega	1 year
Tsegaye Getachew	East Wallega	1 year
Umahar Tahir	Jimma	1 year
Wabe Haji	Finfinnee*	1 year
Wakoyya Ogo	East Wallega	2.4 years
Waktola Tasissa	West Wallega	1 year
Yadessa Sarbessa	West Showa	1 year
Yohannes Leggesse	Finfinnee*	6 months
Zelalem Geneti	East Wallega	1.8 years

*Finfinnee is the Oromo name for Addis Ababa.

Appendix 5. Torture methods as listed by Oromo prisoners' report, relayed by HRLHA, 25 July 2009.

'Blindfolding with black piece of cloth and tying tightly all over head and masking the whole body;
Handcuffing and shackling legs for a long time;
While torturing, stuffing dirty clothes, prisoner's own socks etc. into mouth to prevent them from screaming for help, which is not available anyways;
Thrashing all over the body, especially around very sensitive extremities and limbs such as on fingers, elbows, knees, and shin bones and on the head;
Threatening by pointing gun/piston into mouth and onto forehead in order to coerce into false confession;
Punching/slapping faces, hitting eyes and ears causing damage and bleeding,
Tying hands up to a peg on ceiling/roof – suspending;
Locking in an isolated dark, concrete-floored freezing room without sunlight, food and fresh air;
Forcing to do highly physically demanding exercises for long hours, usually until the person loses control of himself/herself, sometimes naked;
Forcing to walk on broken glasses and bottles with barefoot;
Prolonged solitary confinement, interrogation, and denial of court visit;
Sleep deprivation by forcing to stand for hours and sometimes for the whole night;
Poking needle into fingers under fingernails;
Extracting/pulling out fingernails by pliers;
Electronic shock all over the body, especially on fingers, legs, buttocks and ears;
Taking to cliffs/hillsides (usually to Entoto Cliff) and threatening the detainee at gun point to push/throw them down from the top of the cliff;
Burying the whole body except the neck and hitting on head while threatening to shoot by gun;
Shaving hair dry with broken bottles, glasses or razor;
Forcing to sit /lay naked on freezing concrete floor for long hours;
Forcing to drink or lick one's own blood after causing to bleed by beating;
Tying and suspending filled bottle on male testicles, likely to castrate (there is one case of castration);
Inserting water bottle into female genitalia;
Beating (male detainees) on the testicles to castrate;
Loud music assaults on ears while standing erect, hands stretching up;
Forcing to eat one's own stools or drink own urine;
Shackling both hands and legs and forcing a thick stick between the arms and legs/knees, body squeezed, then keeping the person in that position for long hours;
Beating on the sole of feet with sticks, wires and rubbers, causing wounds;
Poking on abdomen and rib bones with barrel/long metals and tip of knife;
Shooting on body extremities (legs and hands), that does not cause instant death, while the detainee observes the assault.'

Appendix 6. Detainees at Shinile, Dire Dawa, E. Hararge, attending court after 5 years detention. HRLHA Press Release 19, September 2009.

Name	Age
Abdalla Mohammed Said alias Hamaa	37
Abdi Ahmed-nur Haso alias Burale	20
Abdi Ali Ahmed	30
Abdi Bashir Usmail	47
Abdi Haji Musaa Mohammed	44
Abdi Osman Adam	25
Ms Abdosh Mummie Jumoo alia Shabbo	34
Abdulahi Musa Hasan	31
Abdulhamid Mohammed Ali	47
Abdurahman Bale Jago	20
Abdurahman Hussein Jibril	28
Abdushaker Omer Elemo	25
Adnan Gushie Ahmed	45
Adunya Mohammed Jibro alias Duniya	22
Ahmed Sheik Yousuf	28
Ahmed Usmael Matako	45
Ahmeddin Ibrahim Hasan alias Daina	28
Ahmed-najash Sheik Abdulhamid	34
Ahmed-nur Urge Hussein	20
Aliyi Abdale Usman	45
Baker Kasim Kaye	45
Ms Chaltu Ibrahim Abdulqadir	80
Chala Muktar Mummei	30
Dursitu Abdala Ahmed	28
Ms Fatie Ammie Sadiko alias Fatish	18
Haji Taha Hasan Bule	44
Hasan Mohammed Ahmed	20
Ibrahim Abdula Wariye	55
Ibrahim Ahmed Abdo	22
Ibrahim Hussein Guracho alias Ibrahim Dheressa	20
Ibrahim Mohammed Jibril	50
Jafar Umar Abdulle	18
Jamal Adam Usman	20
Jamal Hamza Kiltu	38
Jamal Hussein Musa	30
Jamal Kadir Ahmed	28
Jamal Kadir Sani	42
Janna Mohammed Adas	24
Kadir Adam Tadacha	30
Kalif Mohammed Sheikh Said	40
Kamal Aliyi Ahmed	22
Ms Kimiya Amin Yousuf	50
Kokab Mohammed Yousuf	25
Mikael Abdulahi Mohammed	80

Moahmmed Umare Mumad	33
Mohammed Abdo Ahmed	26
Mohammed Ali Hussein alias Mohammed Gudda	50
Mohammed Aliyi Sagda	30
Mohammed Anjaba Abdulla alias Falmataa	30
Mohammed H/Ibrahim Abdulla	35
Mohammed Ibrahim Adam	28
Mohammed-nur Ahmed Bule	30
Muktar Abduljalil Ahmed	28
NureUsman Jilo alias Biitee Jiloo	56
Omer Mohammed Mahmoud	22
Ms Rabla Sharif Omer	18
Ms Rahma Mohammed Abdurahman	20
Said Adam Ali	66
Saliye Abdalla Mohammed	67
Ms Samira Mumie Abdulahi	30
Shakir Tuke Hasan	18
Sham Ibrahim Abdalla	20
Sharif Ali Mohammed	26
Sharif Omer Elemo	50
Sheik Kadir Tura Liye	65
Sheik Mohammed Ismael Ginno	42
Siraj Ahmed Musa	20
Taha Ahmed Abduro	23
Yousuf Chalho Ahmed	56
Yousuf Dawud Yousuf	30
Ms Zahara Abdosh Ibrahim	45
Ms Zeynaba Matan Ahmed	18
Zubier Hussein Mohammed alias Lenjisaa Bokee	30

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