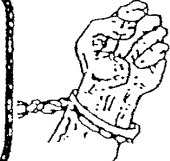




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SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR ETHIOPIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS (SOCEPP)



MARCH 4/2009

REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA:
WHY FLAWED, WHY INCOMPLETE

SOCEPP has time and again expressed its disappointment over flawed and incomplete reports on the human rights situation being made by the US State Department and other foreign human rights agencies. These reports, often biased and superficial, have made the reason for the existence of SOCEPP still valid. SOCEPP was established 14 years ago to focus on political prisoners FORGOTTEN or ignored by foreign (and one local) human rights bodies for unexplained reasons.

The 2008 report by the US State Department fails to mention dozens of the disappeared in Ethiopia and once again passes in silence the fate of Tsegaye Gebre Medhin, Yishak Debre Tsion, Sitotaw Hussein, Aberash Berta, Amha Belete, Hagos Bezabih, Abebe Ainekulu and many others often cited by SOCEPP. Disappeared journalist Berhanu Ijigu has not also been mentioned. SOCEPP has often complained that such foreign reports reek of bias, minimizing the extent of the violations, ignoring the victims from certain specific organizations and ethnic groups. Railroaded Abera Yemanab, more than 13 years in prison, is still ignored by Amnesty and other bodies. Azanaw Demile, Atanaw Wassie and many others deported by the Sudan and disappeared in Ethiopia are not considered worthy of mention it seems.

The US statement alleges that most of the people jailed during the May 2005 election fraud and massacre have now been released. This is far from the truth. SOCEPP invites the US observers and others making the same kind of allegation to visit the prison camps of Zwai, Dedesa, Bir Sheleko and Shoa Robit -- not to mention the "ghost " prisons in Addis Ababa itself. The Meles regime holds at least 35,000 political prisoners all over Ethiopia and most of these have not ever been brought before a court of law. Claims made by the regime and echoed by the US report that more than 2000 prisoners have been released/amnestied in Tigray covers the grim reality of thousands of other political prisoners suffering in the fetid dungeons of Makalle, Quiha, and other places in Tigray.

When will the cover up and the prejudiced reporting end?

INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS INJUSTICE EVERYWHERE
SOCEPP, POSTFACH 51213, BERLIN 13372, GERMANY
SOCEPP, 30 RIGA COVE, WINNIPEG, MB R2P 2Z7, CANADA
E MAIL: SOCEPP @AOL.COM
WEB SITE: WWW.SOCEPP.DE