

## **An urgent call**

### **For the Immediate disclosure of the Whereabouts People Who Have Been Abducted and Disappeared!**

#### **61st Special Report**

**March 21/2003**

The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) has, since it was established on October 10, 1991, issued 18 regular and 60 special reports. Through these reports, EHRCO has exposed a great number of human rights violations. It has also been repeatedly calling on the government to bring before the law those perpetrators of human rights violations. It still continues to do so. Moreover, EHRCO has repeatedly urged the appropriate authorities to release individuals who have been illegally detained; to compensate those individuals who have sustained physical injuries or lost parts of their bodies as a result of beatings and maltreatments inflicted upon them by government armed men; return illegally confiscated properties to their rightful owners; adjudicate cases of those who have undergone administrative mistreatment (abuses); immediate release persons who have been abducted and whose whereabouts are unknown. EHRCO continues to raise its voice regarding these issues.

It would have been the primary duty of a government that claims to stand for the cause of democracy, the rule of law, and the respect of human rights, to be governed by and ensure the respect of the very laws which it has promulgated and the universal declarations and conventions which it has ratified. In principle, the EPRDF government should, through its own initiative, take practical action to demonstrate its commitment to ensuring the rule of law, the establishment of a democratic system, and the respect of human rights. In cases where it finds it difficult to do so, the government should take practical action towards the achievement of these ends on the basis of the clues provided to it and calls made by bodies such as EHRCO. However, the regime continues to turn a deaf ear to the evidence, appeals, suggestions and views forwarded to it by EHRCO and other parties that are deeply concerned about the country's fate and destiny. The unwillingness on the part of the government to give serious attention to the issues is perplexing indeed.

EHRCO has been repeatedly urging and entreating the government to take measures with a view to checking and putting under control various human rights violations that are being committed in the country. The cases of those persons whose whereabouts are unknown after they were abducted by state security forces are among most serious human rights violation issues. There are many people who have been abducted by state security forces from the streets, their residences, and offices and whose whereabouts remain unknown ever since. EHRCO has, in the reports it has issued so far, disclosed that 210 people have been abducted by state security forces and taken to unknown destinations. EHRCO has, through its investigative and follow-up efforts, discovered that a few of the individuals that were abducted have been released after having undergone great miseries and ordeals. The whereabouts of most of the rest still remain unknown. EHRCO has confirmed from the families of the abducted persons that the whereabouts of the persons

whose names and photographs presented in this report are unknown since the time of their abduction. EHRCO is in the process of following up the situation of the remaining others who have been abducted. It would disclose details of these cases in the future.

State security forces have arbitrarily abducted 37 individuals in violation of Article 17(1) of the FDRE Constitution which stipulates, “No one shall be deprived of his or her liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedures as are established by law” and Articles 3 and 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulate: “Everyone has the right to live, liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest , detention.” The whereabouts of these individuals remain unknown since they were abducted. The names of these individuals are listed below. \*

**1. Reta Mossisa Duguma:** On Senie 12/1984 (E.C.) at about 3:00 p.m., Retta was driving a government owned station wagon, plate code no. 4-05902, along the road to Merkato. When he reached the CINEMA RAS area, EPRDF armed men opened fire and forced him to stop the car. They then pulled him out of the car, put him under arrest and took him to an unknown destination. EHRCO has reported on this incident in its 6th Regular Report which it issued on Tahsas 26/1986 (E.C.). However, the whereabouts of the abducted individual remained unknown until this report was issued for the second time.

**2. Wakuma Sebboka** He is married and has five children. On Miazia 28/1985, at 8:00 a.m., armed security men in plainclothes went to the Commercial Bank Branch Office located in Merkato where he worked, picked him up and whisked him off. EHRCO has reported on the incident in its 6th Regular Report which it issued on Tahsas 16/1986 (E.C.). However, the whereabouts of this individual remained unknown until this report was issued for the second time.

**3. Efrem Fantaye Bellete:** During his stay in Russia on a scholarship, Efrem obtained a master’s degree in international journalism. While working for his doctor’s degree there, he received information that his mother at home (in Ethiopia) was taken ill. So he came back home to visit his mother. During his stay here in Ethiopia, he used to participate in meetings that were organized and held by various locally operating political organizations. Efrem expressed his personal views on issues that were raised at a meeting organized by “United Democratic Nationals” that was held at the hall of the then Ethiopian Light and Electric Power Authority (EELPA) on Yekatit 23/1985 (E.C.). Efrem was put under arrest by unidentified men as he was leaving the hall after the meeting came to a close. They took him to the premises of the nearby Ammunitions Factory where they detained him, beat him up and released him on the same day. Ever since, they continued to tail and intimidate him. He made the necessary travel arrangements to return to Russia on Miazia 22/1995 (E.C.) along with his wife and two daughters. On the eve of his departure, Miazia 21/1985 (E.C.), Efrem left his home on private business and never returned ever since. EHRCO reported on the situation in its 5th Regular Report which it

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\* We couldn’t get the photographs from the families of some of those who have disappeared

issued on Sene 3/198 (E.C.). The whereabouts of this individual remained unknown until this report was issued for the second time.

4. **Abbaineh Shiferraw**: Abbaineh was a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 10, Kebele 04. During the reign of the Derg, he was imprisoned for 8 years because he was a member of the EPRP. Upon his release from prison, he pursued his studies in Arba Minch Water Technology College. After graduation, he worked with the Gode Project under the Water Resources Development Commission. He was then engaged in running his own private business. On Miazia 8/1986 (E.C.) Ato Abaineh chatted with his friends at his residence for some time. At about 7:30 p.m., he left his residence to see his friends off. On his way back home, men jumped out of a white Land Cruiser that was parked at a distance of 30 meters forced him into the car and took him off. EHRCO had reported on the incident in its 7th Regular Report which it issued on Nehassie 20/1986 (E.C.). The whereabouts of the individual remained unknown until this report was issued for the second time.

5. **Getachew Abebe**: Ato Getachew was supervising the construction of his own residential house at a site located in Addis Ababa, Woreda 17, Kebele 20. On Miazia 22/1986 (E.C.) Getachew went to the construction site where he stayed the whole day and never returned home. EHRCO had reported on the situation in 7 Regular Report it issued on Nehassie 20/1986 (E.C.). The whereabouts of this individual remained unknown until this report was issued for the second time.

6. **Getachew Workneh**: Ato Getachew used to work with the Addis Ababa Ghion Hotel. He left his home for his office on Miazia 21/1986 (E.C.) and never returned since then. Members of his family had said that Getachew was being tailed by unidentified men before his disappearance. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 7th Regular Report which it had issued on Nehassie 20/1986. The individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was issued for the second time.

7. **Aklilu Ayele**: On Ginbot 17/1986 (E.C.) Ato Aklilu, was, along with his friends, on his way to his residence located in Addis Ababa, Wereda 15, Kebele 26. Unidentified men called him and confirmed that he was "Aklilu". They then forced him into a Neva vehicle, Plate No. 2-16035, and took him to an unknown destination. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 7th Regular Report which it published on Nehassie 20/1986. The individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

8. **Adane Argaw Tesemma**: Ato Adane who is married and has four children used to be a resident of Dire Dawa town. The individual was the chairman of the Gurage Peoples

Democratic Front (GPDF) in this town. He fled to Addis Ababa to avoid tailing, harassment and intimidation by government armed men. On Ginbot 24/1986 (E.C.), at about 6:00 p.m., as Adane walked along the side of the road near kebele 07 office behind Tourist Hotel in Arat Kilo, four men jumped out of a car Plate no. 2-15403 that parked nearby, put him under arrest, brutally clubbed him with rifle butts, pushed him into the car and took him to an unknown destination. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 7th Regular Report which it published on Nehassie 20/1986 (E.C.). The individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**9. Cadet Mekonen Yonas Irgete G/Yohannes:** Cadet Yonas was a member of the All Amhara Peoples' Organization (AAPO). On Ginbot 29/1986 (E.C.) at about 6:45 p.m., unidentified armed men arrested Cadet Yonas in Addis Ababa, Wereda 19 area where he is residing, beat him up, pushed him into a white painted car, Plate no. 2/AA 45178 and drove away. Ever since, the whereabouts of the individual are unknown. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 8th Report which it published in the month of Senie (June)/1987 (E.C.). The individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**10. Zewdu Abebe:** Zewdu was a resident of Shewa Robit town. He came to Addis Ababa to celebrate Easter with his mother. On Ginbot 16/1986 (E.C.) at 10:00 a.m. men in police uniform arrested at Zewdu for unknown reasons in the area of the bridge called "Irri Bekentu" located in wereda 2, kebele 13. They then threw him into a government owned car Plate No. 4-13015 and took him away to an unknown destination. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 8th Regular Report which it published in the month of Senie /1987 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**11. Abiyuwork Haile Mariam and Damtew Taffesse:** These two individuals are friends. They left their common residence on Ginbot 19/1986 (E.C.), and never returned. Ato Damtew Taffesse and Ato Abiyuwork Haile Mariam left their common residence at 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., respectively. Ato Abiyuwork Haile Mariam had been actively involved in the student unrest that took place at Addis Ababa University in 1985 (E.C.). Abiyuwork was a 4th year student at the time. A year after the disappearance of the two individuals, a person who said he had once been detained in the Central Criminal Investigation Department told their families that he had met them while he was detained there (at the department). Members of their families went to the department and asked the officials whether the individuals were there. They were told that they were not there. EHRCO had reported about the situation in its 8th Regular Report in the month of Senie /1987 (E.C.). However, the individuals' whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**12. Getachew Eshetu and Birhanu Ijigu:** These two individuals were abducted from the area of Wereda 17, Kebele 25 in Addis Ababa on Senie 15/1986. Their whereabouts

are unknown ever since. Prior to his abduction, Ato Birhanu Ijigu was being tailed by men unknown to him. While walking with a friend in the area of St. Stephanos Church on Senie 12/1986, he realized that he was being followed by a car, sometimes from behind and sometimes from the front. The individual, who realized that he was being followed, changed his direction and run off into a village at a terrific speed. The car which followed him at great speed tried to hit him violently. He avoided the accident by running away. After this attempt on his life, Ato Birhanu Ijigu abandoned his residence and went to his relatives where he hid himself. In order to get money he needed for making preparations to go abroad, Ato Birhanu, on Senie 15/1986 (E.C.), went to his friend Ato Getachew's office which was located in the area of Imperial Hotel. Upon reaching the office, he met Ato Getachew. Then Ato Birhanu and Ato Getachew made their way to the latter's residence in a car. The Fiat vehicle with the Plate no. 2-43597 belonged to Ato Getachew. The two individuals and their car disappeared without trace. The whereabouts of the two individuals remain unknown ever since. Ato Birhanu Ijigu was formerly a member of EHRCO. Ato Birhanu used to work with Ato Tesfaye Tadesse in "Lubar" private newspaper which is out of print now. Ato Tesfaye Tadesse was brutally killed earlier. EHRCO's 8th Regular Report that was published in Senie/1987 (E.C.) had reported on the disappearance of the two individuals. The whereabouts of the two abducted individuals remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**13. Shemillis Aragaw:**

Ato Shimellis served in the police force until he was promoted to the rank of captain. He served as wereda administrator in Mekele, Adwa, Wollo and Kemisie. He had also served as head of legal services section in Debre Birhan town administration until he was pensioned. He left his residence (Addis Ababa, wereda 4, Kebele 37, H.No. 376) on Ginbot 18/1986 at about 11:00 p.m. and never returned. His whereabouts are not known ever since. At the time, three unidentified men were waiting in the area of the individual's residence. Eyewitnesses have told Ato Shimellis' family that these unidentified men stayed in one place until Ato Shimellis left his residence and that they started following him after he left his residence. EHRCO has reported on this case in its 8th Regular Report which it published in the month of Senie/1987 (E.C.). However, the whereabouts of the individual remained unknown until this report was issued for the second time.

**14. Ashenafi Mengistu Imiru:** He was a resident of Addis Ababa, wereda 14, kebele 18 and a history teacher at Misrak Comprehensive Secondary School. On Meskerem 9/1986 (E.C.), at 3:00 p.m., members of the army in uniform and other men in plain clothes who jumped out of a car detained the individual near Trinity Cathedral and took him to an unknown destination. EHRCO had reported on the incident in its 6th Regular Report which it published on Tahsas 26/1986 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**15. Getinet Asnake Mekonnen :**

Was a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 16, Kebele 04 and a teacher at Misrak Comprehensive High School. The whereabouts of this individual remain unknown since he left his residence on Meskerem 8/1986 (E.C.). EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 6th Regular Report which it published on Tahsas 26/1986 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**16. Second Lt. Girma Asfaw:**

He was detained by unidentified men in Addis Ababa, wereda 4 area on Meskerem 6/1986 (E.C.) at 6:30 p.m. His whereabouts remained unknown for twenty days. On Meskerem 28/1986 (E.C.), a person told his family over the phone that "Second Lt. Girma Asfaw is detained in the former Naval Force Headquarters located in the Shiro Meda area". On the next day, Meskerem 29/1986 (E.C.), members of Second Lt. Girma's family went to the said place and handed in food. They could not, however, meet him in person. On the same day, his family had, through the prison, received a letter written by Second Lt. Girma Asfaw. After a week, the family members went to the same spot to hand in food. The prison guards told them that "there is no prisoner here. This is a military camp and not a prison." Later on, an individual told Second Lt. Girma's family

members that, “he was imprisoned for nine months in the compound of the former Naval Forces Headquarters along with Second Lt. Girma Asfaw and released on Nehassie 21/1986 (E.C.); before his release, Second Lt. Girma Asfaw was told he had been released; he had packed up and left the prison”. Second Lt. Girma Asfaw’s whereabouts still remain unknown. However, EHRCO had reported on the case in its 6th Regular Report that was published on Tahsas 26/1986(E/C.). The individual’s whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

**17. Stephanos Argaw :**

He is an inhabitant of North Shoa, Assagirt wereda, Atkarina Mesgida Peasants Association. He is married and has two children. He fled to Addis Ababa when the government started to detain inhabitants of the area in the conflict that broke out between bandits that stayed in the area of his residence and government armed forces. Troops that came in an army vehicle (WAZ) arrested Ato Stephanos on Nehassie 7/1986 (E.C.), at 4:00 p.m. in Addis Ababa, wereda 18, kebele 35 where he lived. The troops then took him to the military camp located in the vicinity of Janmeda where he stayed in detention until Nehassie 10/1986 (E.C.). Nobody knows where they took him after Nehassie 11/1986 (E.C.). EHRCO has informed government and international bodies regarding the situation in its 8th Report which it issued in the month of Senie, 1987 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

18. **Ato Asrate Mekonnen** was an inhabitant of North Shoa, Assagirt Wereda, Atkarina Mesgida Peasants Association. He fled to Addis Ababa when the government started to detain inhabitants of the area in the conflict that flared up between bandits that operated in the area of his residence and government armed troops. Upon coming to Addis Ababa, Ato Asrat rented a residential house in wereda 20, kebele 38. On Nehassie 4/1987 (E.C.), at about 10:00 p.m., armed men went to his residence, put him under arrest and whisked him off to the military camp located in the Janmeda area where he was kept under detention from Nehassie 4/1987(E.C.) to Nehassie 11/1987(E.C.). His whereabouts had been unknown since Nehassie 12/1987(E.C.). EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 8th Regular Report which it published in the month of Senie, 1987(E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

19. **Molla Ijigu** was a resident of Addis Ababa, wereda 9, kebele 21, House No. 968 and a teacher at W/o Kelemeworq Elementary and Junior Secondary School. On Nehassie 6/1986(E.C.), at 6:00 a.m., Ato Molla left his residence with his luggage to travel to Debre Markos to visit his relatives. His whereabouts are unknown ever since. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 8th Regular Report which it published in the month of June, 1987(E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

20. **Ayalew Abate** is a resident of Addis Ababa, wereda 18, kebele 02, House No. 238. On May 14/1986 (E.C.) at 10:00 a.m., Ato Ayalew left his house to buy fruits from a nearby store

and never returned. His whereabouts are unknown ever since. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 7th Report which it has published on Nehassie 20/1986 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.



21. **Motbainor Nurie**: Ato Motbainor was a teacher at Sikella Junior Secondary School located in North Omo Zone, Arba Minch town. In 1986 (E.C.) he entered Addis Ababa Kotebe Teachers college where he was taking a diploma course. Ato Motbainor's whereabouts were unknown since Nehassie 28/1986 (E.C.). EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 8th Regular Report which it published in the month of Senie, 1987 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

22. **Captain Yohannes Afeworq**: He was a member of the former army. On Meskerem 19/1989 (E.C.), at about 11:00 a.m., Captain Yohannes left his house and made his way to Bole International Airport to receive a friend coming from abroad. His whereabouts are unknown ever since. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 8th Report which it published in the month of Senie, 1987 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

23. **Ato Teshome Beyene**: Under the Derg regime he was imprisoned from 1970 (E.C.) to 1987 (E.C.) for being an EPRP member. Following the change of government in 1983 (E.C.), he was working as an expert in the economic sector of Region 14 administration. Ato Teshome's whereabouts remain unknown since he left his house on Senie 8/1986 (E.C.). EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 8th Regular Report which it published in the month of Senie/ 1987 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

24. **Major Tilahoun Yitna** : Major Tilahoun Yitna was an employee of the former Naval Force. He was a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 28, Kebele 02. Major Tilahoun left his house on Ginbot 18/1986 and never returned. His whereabouts are unknown ever since. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 8th Regular Report which it has published in the month of May 1987 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

25. **Teshome Bimirew**: Ato Teshome was a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 28, Kebele 02, House No.457. He left his house on Hidar 2/1988 (E.C.) at 2:00 p.m. saying he would visit relatives, but he never returned. His whereabouts were unknown ever since. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 10th Regular Report which it published in the month of Meskerem, 1989 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

26. **Indesirachew Admassie**: was a resident of Gondar town, Higher 3, Kebele 17, House No. 107. He used to work with North Gondar Rental Houses Administration agency. He was abducted by unidentified armed men while leaving his office at the agency. His whereabouts have been unknown ever since. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 10th report which it had published in the month of Meskerem, 1989 (E.C.). However, the whereabouts of the individual remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

27. **Mulu Ambaw**: Ato Mulu was a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 16, Kebele 02, House No. 225 who was engaged in private business. Before he undertook private business ventures, he had served as Director of Urban Planning college. He was detained by security forces on Miaiza 24/1989 (E.C.) while walking to his residence after staying in the area of Higher 15, kebele 31. His whereabouts are unknown ever since. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 12th Regular Report which it published in the month of Hidar, 1990 (E.C.). However, Ato Mulu's whereabouts had remained unknown until this report was published for the second time. Ato Mulu Ambaw was a former member of EHRCO. He was a close friend of Ato Asseffa Maru, who was assassinated by security forces on Miazia 30/1989 (E.C.)

28. **Ato Mulatu Kenaa**: was a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 8, Kebele 35, House No. 871. Ato Mulatu was detained for unknown reasons by security forces on Tikimt 27/1990 (E.C.), at 9:30 a.m. while walking in Addis Ababa, Wereda 25, Kebele 16 area. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 12th Regular Report which it published in the month of Hidar, 1990 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

29. **Corporal Zerihun Kinatti**: He was a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 10, Kebele 02, House No. 598 who had worked with a building construction company. Previously, the individual was a non-commissioned officer in the former army. On Tikimt 7/1990 (E.C.) he was relaxing with his friend in a drinking joint located in the wereda where he lived. While relaxing there, two members of the security force in police uniform and two others in plain clothes pulled Corporal Zerihune out of the drinking joint, forced him into a land cruiser, Plate No.2, whose plate is unknown and took him to Semien Park (Belai Zeleke road). His whereabouts are unknown ever since. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 13th Regular Report which it published in the month of Hidar, 1990 (E.C.). However, the individual's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

30. **Ato Wodaje Alemu**: Ato Wodaje rented a privately owned house located in Addis Ababa, Wereda 17, Kebele 17 which he used as an office and worked as a broker to earn his living. On Nehassie 12/1990 (E.C.) at about 5:00 a.m., Ato Wodaje was walking back home from his office when security men in a white Cobra car, Plate 2-3532 arrived and

blocked his way. Two of the security men jumped out of the car, held Ato Wodaje by the neck and tried force him into the car. Ato Wodaje effectively resisted their attempts. Two other armed men jumped out of the same car, threatened to kill him, strongly pushed him into the car and took him away. The same armed men then went back to the spot where they arrested Ato Wodaje, warned two individuals who had witnessed the incident not to tell anybody about it, and left. The two individuals who had witnessed the incident were employed as guards at a private residence that was located around the area where the incident took place. EHRCO has reported about the incident in its 14th Regular Report which it published in the month of Megabit, 1991 (E.C.). The whereabouts of the individual was unknown until this report was published for the second time.

31. **Ato Negesse Dubbissa Hirpa**: He is a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 7, Kebele 28, House No. 322. He has seven children. He had served as Sanitary Engineer and head of the Health Bureau, zonal health office, Region 14 Health Bureau. He had gone to the war front where he rendered medical service from Miazia 20/1991 (E.C.) to Hamle 22/1991 (E.C.) Upon his return from the war front, the Zone One Health Office suspended him from his position and payment. While under this situation, Ato Negesse left his residence on Tikimt 23/1992 (E.C.) on private business and never returned. On the evening of the same day, an individual who preferred not to disclose his name and address told Ato Negesse's family over the telephone that he (Ato Negesse) got a job and has left for a region and that they shouldn't worry. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 18 Regular Report which it published in the month of Nehassie, 1994 (E.C.). However, Ato Negesse's whereabouts remained unknown since his disappearance until this report was prepared.

32. **Ato Ararso Bedassa**: 52-year old Ato Ararso, is a resident of Awassa town, Wereda 2, Kebele 7, House No. 2630. He has ten children. He was a former member of OLF. When OLF resorted to armed struggle, Ato Ararso withdrew his membership, resumed his peaceful private life just like any Ethiopian citizen. On Tahsas 20/1992 (E.C.), he came to Addis Ababa and never returned to his house. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 18th Regular Report which it published in the month of Nehassie, 1994. However, the whereabouts of the individual nor his condition are unknown since the day he disappeared.

33. **Ato Benti Gudeta**: He is a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 10, Kebele 22 and has 4 children. On Tahsas 20/1990 (E.C.), at about 8:00 a.m., he took his children to school and went to his friend who lives in the area of "Biheretsigie" Recreation Park. Upon his arrival at the spot, unidentified government armedmen separated him from his friend, put him under arrest, and took him to an unknown destination. The friend of the person who was abducted (Ato Benti) brought the children back from school on the evening of the same day and told Ato Benti's wife that he was taken away by armed men. On Tahsas 27/1990 (E.C.), Ato Benti's family reported the case to the Wereda police station located in the area where the incident took place. However, Ato Benti's family said that the police station officer on duty had responded in an irresponsible manner and told them to "get away from here" and drove them away. On the same day, Ato Benti's wife went to the Central Criminal Investigation Department, and spoke to the head of investigation regarding the case. The head of investigation told Ato Benti's wife that he (Benti) is not her legal husband and that she had no right to ask him about him, and she was driven

away. Meanwhile, in the month of Tikimt, 1991 (E.C.), two government armedmen went to the residence of the abducted person (Ato Benti) and asked his wife W/o Tigist Teklu, to pay them birr 10,000 so that her husband would be released. W/o Tigist told EHRCO that she promised to give them the money, and secretly reported about the case to Region 14 police Commission, and that the armed men were put under arrest. EHRCO had reported about the case in its 17th Regular Report which it published in Tikimt, 1994 (E.C.). However, the whereabouts of the individual remained unknown until this report was compiled.

34. **Ato Siraj Mohammed**: Ato Siraj is a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 17, Kebele 24, House No. 119. On Tikimt 9, 1993 (E.C.), at about 10:30 a.m., Ato Siraj left his house along with two daily labourers each of whom carried a plastic container. As he walked for about 300 meters and reached the mosque, a cobra car with a private plate no. stopped in front of the individual and blocked his way. Shortly after, 7 armed men who were in the car (some of them in police uniform, the rest in plainclothes) got out, and put Ato Siraj and the two laborers in the parked car. They then clobbered them with rifle butts and punched them for ten minutes while the car was still parked. The two laborers begged the armed men to release them. The armed men threw them out of the car and released them. The armed men couldn't load the containers on the car because they were too large. So they threw the containers away and took away the individual only. One of the armed men remained behind to guard the material that was left on the ground and waited. After a while, a privately owned brown Toyota DX car arrived, and picked the guard and the material. EHRCO had reported about the incident in its 17th Regular Report which it published in the month of Tikimt, 1994 (E.C.). Ato Siraj Mohammed's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was compiled.

35. **Youth Hailu Desta**: 28-year-old Hailu is a resident of Debre Markos town, Higher 1, Kebele 01, House No. 221. He was an observer for a resident of the area who had run as an independent candidate for a seat in the House of Peoples Representatives in the national elections that were held in the month of Ginbot, 1992 (E.C.). Before the elections, he had conducted an agitation (election) campaign by disseminating the competitor's emblem. He was repeatedly intimidated by and received threats from local officials in this connection. The threats and intimidations that were directed at him never ceased even after the elections. Hailu left his residence on Tahsas 13/1993 (E.C.) and never returned. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 18th Regular Report which it had published in the month of Nehassie, 1994 (E.C.). However, the youth's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was published for the second time.

36. **Woizero Seble Wengel Demissie**: W/o Seble Wengel is a resident of Addis Ababa, Wereda 7, Kebele 14, House No. 527. She has two children. On Ginbot 17/1994, in the evening, she was called by unidentified men and went out of her house. She never returned ever since. EHRCO had reported on the situation in its 18th Regular Report which it issued in the month of Nehassie, 1994 (E.C.). W/o Seble Wengel, who is an Oromo, was always opposed to the human rights violations perpetrated against Oromos. Her husband searched for her in the various police stations in Addis Ababa. It has, however been impossible to determine the situation she is in.

37. **Ahmed Oumer Ali**: is a resident of Dire Dawa town, Higher 4, Kebele 23. On Tikimt 25/1987 (E.C.) at about 8:00 p.m., Ato Ahmed and five individuals whom he lived with in the same house were on their way back after praying at the Mosque located in the town when they were all detained, put in a truck and taken away. The five individuals who were with him were released after five months. However, Ato Ahmed's whereabouts remained unknown until this report was compiled. EHRCO has reported on the situation in its 18th Regular Report which it published in the month of Nehassie, 1994 (E.C.). However, it has been impossible to establish whether the individual is alive or not until this report was published. EHRCO has learnt from its follow-ups that he was abducted and disappeared on allegations that he is a member of an opposition group called "Jarra".

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### **Conclusion**

Human rights violations being perpetrated by security forces against citizens in the ways described above should not be condoned. One of the government's most important responsibilities consists of facilitating conditions under which citizens could leave and return to their residence and work and earn their living under a peaceful environment. Harassing innocent citizens, detaining them from wherever they are without any justifiable reason or without a court warrant and cause their disappearance instead of putting them before the court, are not actions that are expected from a government that claims to stand for public interests and the maintenance of peace. It would be difficult to assume that peace and stability would reign supreme in the country if people's rights to lead peaceful lives are not respected.

EHRCO therefore calls on the government to:

1. effect the release of the individuals who were abducted by government armed men and disappeared.
2. inform the families and relevant bodies on the situation of the individuals who were abducted by government forces, and disappeared; on where they were taken and on the present conditions they are in.
3. compensate the individuals that are presently suffering under such conditions; compensate their families.

EHRCO urges relevant government officials and bodies to take all the appropriate legal measures against those who have committed human rights violations. EHRCO also calls on citizens, non-government organizations as well as representatives of international

organizations to write letters to the Ethiopian government officials and bodies whose names are listed below requesting them to take measures to ensure the respect of citizen's human and democratic rights and the rule of law.

- House of Peoples Representatives

P.O.Box 80001 - fax (251-1) 550900, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- House of the Federation

P.O.Box 80001 - fax (251-1) 550722, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- H.E. Lt. Girma Wolde Giorgis, FDRE President

P.O.Box 1031, fax (251-1) 552020, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- H.E. Ato Meles Zenawi, FDRE Prime Minister

P.O.Box 1031 - fax (251-1) 552020, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- H.E. Ato Harka Haroye, FDRE Minister of Justice

P.O.Box 1370 - fax (251-1) 520874, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- Addis Ababa City Administration Office

P.O.Box 2458, Fax (251-1) 51 14 79, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia