

53rd Special Report

To render displaced people shelterless is unjust

July 3, 2002

Introduction

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Derg, Ethiopians who had lived in Assab and Eritrea until 1991 were displaced by Shabia from their homes. The displaced Ethiopians were kicked out without taking their property and riches which they had accumulated over the years. After having undergone great miseries and inconveniences, they came to Addis Ababa to seek the support of the Ethiopian government.

In a petition to the government, they gave a harrowing description of the trials and tribulations they had undergone and the injustices they had suffered at the hands of the Shabia and appealed to the Prime Minister's office to provide them with shelters and give them other forms of support. In accordance with an order issued by the government in a letter from the Prime Minister's Office dated Tir 2 (m56/850/1/84), the displaced Ethiopians were given permission to temporarily stay in shelters located in various Weredas in Addis Ababa.

For the past ten years, the displaced persons lived under such conditions in the various shelters located in the 14 Weredas of the city. Lately, the displaced persons who used to live in three of the fourteen Weredas were forcibly kicked out of their shelters by Region 14 Administration and the Police. As a result of this measure, they have been dispersed in all places and are facing extremely grave difficulties. The displaced Ethiopians who are staying in shelters located in some of the Weredas have been notified to evacuate. Their future lives are therefore at stake and quite uncertain. EHRCO staff have gone to the shelters, met the displaced people in person, spoke to them and gathered considerable evidence about their situation. In the process, EHRCO has established that the situation described has been worsened.

The government has spontaneously issued an urgent notice ordering the displaced people (who had lived in the shelters for over ten years) to evacuate the area. The government has taken such a measure without making any preparations and without taking the rainy season into consideration. The notice says that the displaced people should each receive a small amount of rehabilitation fund from the Administration's Public Relations and Development Cooperation Bureau and evacuate their temporary shelters within a few days. EHRCO has gathered sufficient information from the notices issued to the displaced people. EHRCO has verified the situation and has presented the following details relating to the number of displaced people who would be affected by the decision.

Table 1 - Displaced people who were forced out of their shelters.

No.	Wereda	Shelter	Number of displaced		
			Male	Female	Total
1	7	Messalemia	675	759	1434

2	10	Inqulal Fabrika	675	650	1325
3	13	Sandford School area	198	256	454
Total			1548	1665	3213

Table 2 - Displaced persons notified to evacuate their shelters.

No.	Wereda	Shelter	Number of displaced		
			Male	Female	Total
1	4	Lideta	231	277	508
2	11	Shiro Meda	61	47	108
3	15	Aware	351	334	658
4	16	Kotebe and Shola	438	463	901
5	19	Sarris	362	523	885
6	20	Kore 1	1058	1262	2320
7	23	Kore 3	361	392	753
8	24	Kore 2	1568	1981	3549
9	25	Kolfe	361	453	814
10	26	Kaliti	1399	1123	2522
11	27	Kaliti	746	816	1562
Total			6936	7671	14607

Conclusion

In a much as the government shoulders the responsibility to safeguard the welfare and well-being of its citizens, it has the obligation to facilitate conditions under which these displaced people would get permanent shelters and be in a position to lead their own lives. However, the government is short of fulfilling these obligations and is leaving the displaced people without shelter. In addition to the displaced people which the government has kicked out of their temporary shelters, the government has given notices to the remaining displaced people to evacuate their shelters on Maskerem 10/1995. It is quite sad to observe that such an inhuman action has been taken against displaced people who had been anxiously awaiting government support and assistance. EHRCO requests the government to put a stop to such action.

EHRCO calls on all individuals and organizations who advocate the respect and protection of human rights to write letters to the following Ethiopian government officials and bodies urging them to immediately stop the inhuman and brutal acts which they are committing against Ethiopians of different age groups displaced from Eritrea.

- The Council of Peoples Representatives

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

- The Federal Council

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. Mr. Meles Zenawi, FDRE Prime Minister

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

- H.E. Mr. Harqua Haroye, FDRE Minister of Justice

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

- The Addis Ababa City Administration

P.O.Box 356, Fax (251-1) 553688, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia