



Ethnic Conflicts are a Threat to Human Rights 96th Special Report

31 October, 2006

Introduction

Conflicts between ethnically grouped students at the different universities of the country have become a serious concern of human rights. Conflicts that frequently erupt at higher learning institutions have caused loss of life and grave body injury, making the problem serious and complex.

It is to be recalled that EHRCO has been issuing reports regarding conflicts among ethnic groups, appealing to concerned governmental bodies to address the problem. However, due to the indifference exhibited by concerned authorities, and even partiality by some officials, the conflict has continued to cause human rights violations.

According to the evidence documented by EHRCO, the damages incurred as a result of the conflicts that occurred at the universities are as follows:

ADAMA UNIVERSITY

On August 29, 2006, at about 9:00 p.m., an ethnically based conflict among the students in the compass of Adama University (Nazareth) has caused loss of life and bodily injury.

1. Tilahun Tadele, 20 years old 1st year student in accounting student, who came from east Gojam, Dejen, died as a result of the beatings on his head and leg.
2. Aregawi Zewde, 22 years old, 1st year management student, received serious injured on his leg as a result o beatings.
3. Abrham G/Medihn, 23 years old, 1st year management student, seriously injured as a result of the beatings on his head and nose.
4. Yihenuw Alemu, 1st year management student, seriously injured as a result of the beatings on his head with sharp iron.
5. Student Chilota Adis Shume, 22 years old, 1st year Management student, suffered injury after beaten by police.

List of students dismissed by the administration of Adama University allegedly for causing disturbance and conflict in the university's compound:

Table 1

No	Names	Department
1	Student Habtu Hussen	Business management
2	" Gebeyaw Endeshaw	Mechanical management
3	" Abubeker Hussen	Business management
4	" Tezera Betae	Accounting
5	" Teka Takele Hadgu	Banking & Insurance
6	" Hadush Goitom	Accounting
7	" Birhanu Meresa	Mechanical management
8	" Tibebu Demisse	Business management
9	" Mamo Fogela	Accounting
10	" Hana Chemedda Serbessa	Information technology Center
11	" Kassahun Elyas Fitte	Accounting
12	" Gemechu Arksae	Mechanical management
13	" Abubeker Teyre	-
14	" Bontu Hailu	-
15	" Kedre Mama Sani	-
16	" Nuredine Hassan Gameda	Business management
17	" Challa Diriba Dabba	" "
18	" Temesgen Goshu Gida	-
19	" Birhanu Tolla	-

Injury caused to Haromaya University Students

The following injuries occurred during the student's conflict in Haromaya University compound on August 24, 2006, about 9:00p.m.

1. Sileshi Nega, 21 years old, 1st year language student, wounded on his head and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital.
2. Shewandagn Aregahegn, 20 years old, 1st year student at the Wave Science Department, wounded on his head and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital.
3. Abebe Mamo, 25 years old, 1st year Physics department student, wounded on his head and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital, which referred him for further treatment on August 28
4. Alkes Mekuria, 20 years old, 1st year Geography department student, wounded on his neck and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital.
5. Dekae Weldemariam, 26 years old, 3rd year Geography summer student, wounded on his neck and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital.
6. Hussien Mehammed, 20 years old, Management department student, wounded twice on his head and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital.
7. Marta Adane, 21 years old Management department student, wounded on her arm and leg, and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital.
8. Kidanemariam Abera, 22 years old Language department student, wounded on his head and admitted to Harar Arbegnoch Hospital.
9. Agenagnew Abera, 22 years old Chemistry department student, under treatment as an out patient at Harar Arbegnoch Hospital after injured on his arm and leg.
10. Student Yilma Bezabih, 22 years old Economics department student, under treatment as an out patient at Harar Arbegnoch Hospital after receiving injury at the back of his head and left arm.

Haromaya University

List of students dismissed by the administration of Haromaya University allegedly for causing disturbance and conflict in the university's compound:

Table 2

No	Names	Year	Department
1	Student Haile Kassa	1 st	Geography
2	" Mebratom	"	English
3	" Werku Jemal	"	Physics
4	" Yetwale Muluneh	"	Management
5	" Tarekegn Wuleneh	"	Management
6	" Tadesse	" "	Accounting
7	" Urael Getachew	"	Management
8	" Mulu Halefew	"	Biology
9	" Mustefa Mehammed	"	Agro Engineering
10	" Kibrom Teka	"	--
11	" Tesfahun Mengist	" "	Physics
12	" Engida Habtamu	"	Chemistry
13	" W/Hawariat Tegegne	"	History
14	" Abse Darge	"	Geography
15	" Serehanu Dagnaw	"	Plant Science
16	" Melkamu Nigatu	"	English
17	" Samrawit Akeze	" "	History
18	" Tirhas Atekilt	"	History
19	" Almaz Work Melak	"	Geography
20	" Tadesse Ayalew	"	Geography
21	" Serka Sisay	"	Geography
22	" Mulunesh Gelayu	"	Accounting
23	" Moges Abate	"	Agricultural B/Management
24	" Adiss Alem	"	Accounting
25	" Samuel Asfaw	" "	Accounting
26	" G/Mikael G/Sillase	" "	Geography
27	" Girmachew Getu	"	Cooperative
28	" Ayalew Tefera	"	English
29	" Mulugeta Henok	"	Management
30	" Getahun	"	Cooperative

Jimma University

The ethnic conflict among students in the compound of Jimma University, on August 24, 2006, caused serious human and property damages; and the teaching process discontinued or sometime. On August 31, 2006, about 10:00am, a building that had several rooms and dormitories for about 300 students as completely burned down; and at about 3:00p.m same day, dormitory of female students was put on fire. Some 15-20 students suspected of arson and the students' Dean named Ato Getachew Abera have been detained by police.

Conclusion

Ethnic conflicts among students at higher learning institutions, especially at universities in Oromia region, as indicated here in above, have caused serious human and material damages. Many students have been dismissed from the universities, teaching learning process have been discontinued on various occasions, and surely the atmosphere of fear and retribution that is inevitable under such circumstances undermines the central mission of higher learning institutions.

EHRCO would, therefore, urge concerned Federal and Regional State organs to:-

- Immediately examine fundamental causes of all of the above conflicts and find sustainable solution for it; and ensure a healthy academic atmosphere at higher learning institutions;
- Bring to justice those responsible for the killing, injuries, and material destructions;
- Ensure that victims of the human rights violations get appropriate compensation.

Finally, EHRCO calls upon national and international organizations, representatives of governments, and international groups who stand for human rights protection and the rule of law to put pressure on government authorities to find sustainable solution to the recurring ethnic conflicts. You can express your concerns by writing to the government bodies and officials listed below.

- Housel of People's Representatives
P.O.Box 80001, Fax (251-1) 1550900 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Council of Federation
P.O.Box 80001, Fax (251-1) 1550722 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- H.E. Ato Girma Wolde Giorgis, President, FDRE
P.O.Box 1031, Fax (251-1) 1552020, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- H.E.Ato Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister, FDRE
P.O.Box 1031, Fax (251-1) 1552020 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- H.E.Ato Assefa Kessito, Minister of Justice, FDRE
P.O.Box 1370 Fax (251-1) 5520874 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Oromiya Regional Council
P.O.Box 101769, Fax (251-1) 5513642, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Ethiopian Human Rights Commission
P.O.Box 1165 Fax (251-1) 6459290, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- The Institute of the Ombudsman
P.O.Box 2459 Fax (251-1) 6459229, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia