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ETHIOPIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (EHRCO)

The government is not fulfilling its duty toward the protection of the innocent!

June 18, 2022

The killing of Innocent People:

Pertinent to the Gambella Region, EHRCO confirms that on June 14, 2022, there had been an assault by an armed group operating within the region which subsequently led to, the loss of life, physical injury, the destruction of property, and granted the exchange of fire in the area shots fired by both government security forces as well as armed groups led many innocent residents to the death as well as physical injury.

EHRCO was also able to confirm that, on June 14, 2022, a youth had been shot dead while having his hand-tied (extra-judicial killing) by persons wearing the uniform of government security forces in Gambella City, Gambella Region; on the same day, organized groups assaulted (in what seems to be based on their identity) numerous civilians based on the claim that they had connections with the said armed group, leading to their beating and killing (including a father and a child); organized groups committed a robbery in some parts of Gambella City and although the government stated that it had controlled the situation, on June 16, 2022 gunshots were still being heard in the City and some concerns were there.

In addition, a picture made public on June 18, 2022, came to depict numerous armed persons wearing the uniform of government security forces beating people in a car and bringing them out to shoot them. Although, it is difficult to determine the when, whom, why, when, and how details of the act, granted that it is extra-judicial killing, EHRCO calls out such an inhumane act, as it also becoming increasingly recurrent.

Violations of Rights Committed in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa:

Of late, the commission of human rights violations on those arrested by the police is becoming noticeable in Addis Ababa. Concerning this, EHRCO has been repeatedly issuing reports and advocating for corrective measures to be taken. And the fact that such an act is being committed by a body as well as government security forces established to ensure the respect of citizens' rights makes it more concerning. EHRCO received a report of a student, in uniform, being assaulted by police forces on the street on June 15, 2022, in Gullele Sub-city, Woreda 07, and that the perpetrators had been caught and thus, under police investigation.

Pertinent to the Dire Dawa City Administration, Dire Dawa City, around Magala area, in Ayugu Hotel, EHRCO was also able to gather that, a bomb thrown by an individual had led to deaths, the physical injury of many, and that the individual had been caught and thus, under investigation.

Related Legal Obligations:

Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and articles 6 (1) and 9 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) enshrine that 'Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.' Confirming such rights, article 2(1) and 2 (2) of the ICCPR also stipulates their duty, within their jurisdiction, to respect, protect, and fulfill. Article 4 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) indicates that 'Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this right.' Article 14 of the FDRE Constitution enshrines that 'Every person has the inviolable and inalienable right to life, the security of person and liberty.' In the same vein, article 15 of the Constitution states that 'Every person has the right to life. No person may be deprived of his life except as a punishment for a serious criminal offense determined by law.' Additionally, article 16 stipulates that 'Everyone has the right to protection against bodily harm.'

Additionally, article 18 of the FDRE Constitution stipulates that 'Everyone has the right to protection against cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.' Article 24 of the Ethiopian Federal Police Commission Establishment Proclamation No. 720/2011 enshrines that 'In exercising police functions, it is prohibited to commit any inhuman or degrading treatment or act ...' The Addis Ababa Police Commission Establishment Council of Ministers Regulation No. 96/2003 confirms that such a provision shall also apply to Addis Ababa Police.

EHRCO's Call:

- Granted that the action committed in the Gambella Region Gambella city by persons wearing uniforms of government security forces was extrajudicial killing, for the government to promptly bring the perpetrators before the law and hold them accountable for the crime,
- For the government to bring those involved in armed group attacks against innocent civilians in the Gambella Region before the law speedily,
- For the government to properly fulfill its duty *vis-à-vis* the swift calming of security conditions as well as restoration of peace and the respect of people's security in the Gambella Region,
- Concerning the picture made public on June 18, 2022, by critically and promptly examining its details, bringing those involved before the law,
- Bringing those involved in the beating of the student in uniform in Addis Ababa before the law and taking educating and legal measures as means to ensure such an act does not recur in the future, and
- Concerning the bomb attack in Dire Dawa City Administration, Megala area, while calling for the government to take a prompt and educating justice but also enforcing monitoring as means to curtail the recurrence of similar acts, EHRCO would like to state that it shall conduct a more detailed investigation of the above-discussed issues.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia