



የኢትዮጵያ

ሰብዓዊ መብቶች ጉባዔ (ኢ.ሰ.መ.ጉ)

**ETHIOPIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (EHRCO)**

---

## **The rights of the detained should be respected immediately!**

June 11, 2022

### **Human Rights Violations Committed against the Detained:**

Ato Sentayehu Chekol, a high-ranking leader of the Balderas for Genuine Democracy Party, while on work in Bahirdar City, Amhara Regional State, was detained and told that he was wanted for questioning without any court order on May 27, 2022, around 3: 00 PM by people covering their faces and claiming to be security forces. EHRCO through its primary and secondary findings (by talking to Ato Sentayehu himself) was able to learn that due to an altercation triggered his mobile phone was broken, he was taken in after additional security forces were brought from 'Andega Police Station,' had not been brought before the court since the time of his arrest, was not clear why or by whom he was arrested, and granted the unsuitability of the Bahirdar 'Andega Police Station' to suspects, that he is concerned that it could implicate adversely upon his health, what is being done is inhumane treatment and, in protest against his current situation, that he has been on a hunger strike since June 7, 2022.

Concerning suspects detained recently under the guise of 'law enforcement in the Amhara Regional State, EHRCO was able to gather that, some are being held in the so-called 'Leyto Makoya' in Eastern Gojjam, Dejen Woreda, Yetnora Kebele, and South Gojjam Zone, Nefas Mewcha (Gayint) City, and that they are unable to meet anyone, including their families.

Additionally, pertinent to Bahirdar City- 'Zetenega Police Station,' EHRCO noted, following the claim of being wanted, the arrest of, from May 30, 2022 onwards, Journalist Ato. Yalelet Wondeye and from June 3, 2022, onwards Zemera Multi-Media Journalist **Ato Demes Ayalew**, as well as that till date they had not been brought before the Court or informed of the reason of their arrest.

Concerning the Oromia Regional State, EHRCO was able to learn, from family members, that Ato Demeke Ayalew Balkew, a resident of Legetafo (Kela area), was taken and arrested at Legetafo Area Police Station on May 28, 2022, by a police officer in the name of questioning from his shop located in his house and where he works, that the station had many arrested in a congested area, due to the inaccessibility of any food and drinks to the arrested in the station, that families have been tending for the needs of the arrested continually, and that until the time of the report, the latter had not been brought before the Court.

Regarding the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region (SNNPR), Derashe Special Woreda, EHRCO was able to confirm through its findings that there **have been increasing cases** of illegal arrests, the arrested from this area are being taken mostly to Arba Mench, Siqella Police Hall, Seecha Police Department, Yetnebersh and Qolla Shara where serious human rights violations are committed, and where no one is allowed to visit them.

Lastly, contrary to the decision of the Federal First Instance Court, **Arada Medeb Chelot** to have Journalist Temesgen Desalegn, Journalist Meaza Mohammed, and Journalist Solomon Shumeye be released on bail, EHRCO, granted its failure to follow the rule of the law, calls out against their detention by the police, and to halt such actions in the future, so that the police would be able to fulfill its duties in line with the law.

### **Related Legal Obligations:**

Article 10 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) stipulates that 'All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.' Article 5 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 7 of the ICCPR determine that 'No

one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.’ Article 5 of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) reads ‘All forms of exploitation and degradation of man, particularly slavery, slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, and treatment shall be prohibited.’

Similarly, article 18 (1) of the FDRE Constitution determines that ‘Everyone has the right to protection against cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.’

Article 9 of the ICCPR stipulates that ‘Anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him.’ Additionally, article 19 sub-articles 1 and 2 of the FDRE Constitution determine that ‘Persons arrested have the right to be informed promptly, in a language they understand, of the reasons for their arrest and any charge against them,’ and ‘[that they have] the right to be brought before a court within 48 hours of their arrest.’ The same constitution, under article 21 (2) stipulates that ‘All persons shall have the opportunity to communicate with, and to be visited by, their spouses or partners, close relatives, friends, religious councilors, medical doctors and their legal counsel.’

### **EHRCO’s Call:**

- For the government to inform Ato Sentayhu Chekol, a high-ranking leader of the Balderas for Genuine Democracy Party, of the charges brought against him and the reason for his arrest immediately, and respect of his right to have access to **speedy justice** by being brought before the court, as well as for his condition and treatment in the Police Station he is being held at to be in line with human dignity as well as to be improved in a manner that does not compromise his health,
- To ensure the respect of the right of Journalist Yayelet Wondeye and Journalist Demes Ayalew to access **speedy justice** by promptly informing them of the charges brought against them and the reason for their arrest, as well as by bringing them before the court,
- Concerning Ato Demeke Ayalew Balkew, a resident in Legetafo- Oromia Regional State, ensuring his access to **speedy justice** by bringing him before the court or else, respecting his physical liberty,
- The immediate cessation of illegal arrests taking place in SNNPR, Derashe Special Woreda, and concerning those who had been taken from SNNPR, Dersahe Special Woreda and arrested in different prisons in Arba Mench, ensuring their access to **speedy justice** by bringing them before the court, or else, respecting their physical liberty,
- The immediate cessation of illegal detention by the police concerning persons who had been acquitted and granted bail rights,
- EHRCO, regarding those arrested in Eastern Gojjam, Dejen Woreda, Yetnora Kebele, and South Gojjam Zone, Nefas Mewcha (Gayint) City, while calling to have their rights of meeting and being visited by their spouses, family members, doctors, as well as legal councilors respected and granted that such prohibitions could be instigators of other human rights violations, the need for a corrective measure, would like to state that it shall provide an in-depth investigation as well as a follow-up comprehensive report on the issues listed above,

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia