

Solidarity Committee for Ethiopian Political Prisoners (SOCEPP-Canada)

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Web: www.humanrightsethiopia.com

April 24 2015

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

RE: Massacre of Ethiopian Refugees is preventable

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

I am writing on behalf of Solidarity Committee for Ethiopian Political Prisoners -Canada (SOCEPP - Canada), a non-profit organization registered in Ontario since 1998. The purpose of this letter is to plead the case of Ethiopian refugees suffering tremendous persecution in countries where Islamic extremist movements are operating.

Violation of basic human rights and civil liberties has forced thousands of young Ethiopians to flee their country of origin to neighbouring countries. The prevailing political repression has compelled desperate Ethiopians to take enormous risks by crossing into dangerous countries and unsafe places. In the process, many have perished in the desert and the high seas; many more have been butchered to harvest and sell their organs; many still sustain a life of cruel slavery in various countries.

While this has been weekly news in the media, the latest news that came on the 19th of April was appalling yet. 30 Ethiopian refugees were shot and beheaded by an Isis militia in Libya. These innocent refugees were killed for no other reason than being Christians and Ethiopians. It is also reported that many more are still in the hands of extremist groups waiting for another savage slaughter; and still more are in hiding looking for a safe way out of this hell. Furthermore, this has heightened the insecurity of Ethiopian refugees living in the rest of the Middle East.

Dear Mr. Harper,

In countries where a great number of Ethiopians have taken refuge, such as Libya and Yemen, ISIS and others groups are active and law and order has failed to protect all, citizens and refugees alike. As the saying goes Ethiopian refugees are stuck between a rock and a hard place; if they go back home they will be persecuted, if they stay where they are their life is also at risk. Therefore, we appeal to you to initiate a variety of benevolent measures that could save thousands of lives, such as:

- 1) Urging the UNHCR to move Ethiopian refugees to safe third countries and provide them appropriate protection;

Email: socepp.can@humanrightsethiopia.com and socepp.can@sympatico.ca

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- 2) Reach out to benevolent Western nations to encourage them to provide Ethiopian refugees increased immigration opportunities;
 - 3) Instruct Immigration and Citizenship Canada to provide increased immigration opportunities to the most threatened refugees, particularly from Libya and Yemen.

I will be more than honored to come in person and present the case and discuss all available solutions.

Sincerely,

Aklilu Wendaferew, MSW, RSW
Chair – SOCEPP Canada

CC:

- Mr. Antonio Guterres; UN High Commissioner for Refugees
Geneva, Switzerland
- Mr. Zeid Ra'ad al Hussien
UN Human Rights Council Commissioner
Geneva, Switzerland