

**SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL
PRISONERS – CANADA (SOCEPP-CAN)**

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P. O. BOX 413 STATION E, TORONTO, ON. M6H 4E3 CANADA.

Email: socepp.can@sympatico.ca

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**PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE FACE DEATH PENALTY, A CALL FOR
IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL
PRISONERS IN ETHIOPIA**

As reported by a number of media sources, on Monday, July 9, 2007, the prosecutors in Ethiopia asked for the death penalty for 38 politicians and activists accused of “inciting violence in an attempt to overthrow the government”.

The state prosecutor Abraham Tetemke is quoted as saying “they have not shown any sign of regret in the court, and they have not (accepted) the sovereignty of the court.” “Therefore we request that they should be punished with capital punishment.”

These political leaders and activists were arrested after the violent government crackdown following the May 2005 election which ended up killing over 190 and wounding many more peaceful demonstrators.

As stated by Amnesty international the accused are “prisoners of conscience imprisoned on account of their non-violent opinions”.

Through similar bogus trials, the ruling group in Ethiopia, the EPRDF, is used to dismantling political opposition in the country. The current farce trial too is part of a strategic move on the part of the government to bar the CUDP leaders from any political activity. Such action is in contravention of internationally accepted standards on Civic and Political rights to which Ethiopia is a signatory.

As documented by numerous human rights groups, today in Ethiopia, besides the 38 political leaders and activists, thousands of other political prisoners languish in unbearable prison condition throughout the country. Many others including the leaders of the banned political party EPRP and supporters of OLF continue to “disappear”.

SOCEPP Canada urges the international community to be cognizant of these facts and call for the immediate and unconditional release of the CUDP leaders, activists and all other political prisoners in the country.

**P. O. BOX 413 STATION E,
TORONTO, ON. M6H 4E3
CANADA.**

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