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ETHIOPIA

Home Office Science and Research Group

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION SERVICE

Country of Origin Information Reports (COI Reports) are produced by the Science & Research Group of the Home Office to provide caseworkers and others involved in processing asylum applications with accurate, balanced and up-to-date information about conditions in asylum seekers' countries of origin.

They contain general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the UK.

The reports are compiled from material produced by a wide range of recognised external information sources. They are not intended to be a detailed or comprehensive survey, nor do they contain Home Office opinion or policy.

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1. Scope of document

- 1.01 This Country of Origin Information Report (COI Report) has been produced by Research Development and Statistics (RDS), Home Office, for use by officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. The Report provides general background information about the issues most commonly raised in asylum/human rights claims made in the United Kingdom. It includes information available up to 31 August 2005.
- 1.02 This COI Report is compiled wholly from material produced by a wide range of recognised external information sources and does not contain any Home Office opinion or policy. All information in the Report is attributed, throughout the text, to the original source material, which is made available to those working in the asylum/human rights determination process.
- 1.03 This COI Report aims to provide a brief summary of the source material identified, focusing on the main issues raised in asylum and human rights applications. It is not intended to be a detailed or comprehensive survey. For a more detailed account, the relevant source documents should be examined directly.
- 1.04 The structure and format of this COI Report reflects the way it is used by Home Office caseworkers and appeals presenting officers, who require quick electronic access to information on specific issues and use the contents page to go directly to the subject required. Key issues are usually covered in some depth within a dedicated section, but may also be referred to briefly in several other sections. Some repetition is therefore inherent in the structure of the Report.
- 1.05 The information included in this COI Report is limited to that which can be identified from source documents. While every effort is made to cover all relevant aspects of a particular topic, it is not always possible to obtain the information concerned. For this reason, it is important to note that information included in the Report should not be taken to imply anything beyond what is actually stated. For example, if it is stated that a particular law has been passed, this should not be taken to imply that it has been effectively implemented unless stated.
- 1.06 As noted above, this COI Report is a collation of material produced by a number of reliable information sources. In compiling the Report, no attempt has been made to resolve discrepancies between information provided in different source documents. For example, different source documents often contain different versions of names and spellings of individuals, places and political parties etc. COI Reports do not aim to bring consistency of spelling, but to reflect faithfully the spellings used in the original source documents. Similarly, figures given in different source documents sometimes vary and these are simply quoted as per the original text. The term 'sic' has been used in this document only to denote incorrect spellings or typographical errors in quoted text; its use is not intended to imply any comment on the content of the material.
- 1.07 The Report is based substantially upon source documents issued during the previous two years. However, some older source documents may have been included because they contain relevant information not available in more recent

documents. All sources contain information considered relevant at the time this Report was issued.

- 1.08 This COI Report and the accompanying source material are public documents. All COI Reports are published on the RDS section of the Home Office website and the great majority of the source material for the Report is readily available in the public domain. Where the source documents identified in the Report are available in electronic form, the relevant web link has been included, together with the date that the link was accessed. Copies of less accessible source documents, such as those provided by government offices or subscription services, are available from the Home Office upon request.
- 1.09 COI Reports are published every six months on the top 20 asylum producing countries and on those countries for which there is deemed to be a specific operational need. Inevitably, information contained in COI Reports is sometimes overtaken by events that occur between publication dates. Home Office officials are informed of any significant changes in country conditions by means of Country of Origin Information Bulletins, which are also published on the RDS website. They also have constant access to an information request service for specific enquiries.
- 1.10 In producing this COI Report, the Home Office has sought to provide an accurate, balanced summary of the available source material. Any comments regarding this Report or suggestions for additional source material are very welcome and should be submitted to the Home Office as below.

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ADVISORY PANEL ON COUNTRY INFORMATION

- 1.11 The independent Advisory Panel on Country Information was established under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 to make recommendations to the Home Secretary about the content of the Home Office's country of origin information material. The Advisory Panel welcomes all feedback on the Home Office's COI Reports and other country of origin information material. Information about the Panel's work can be found on its website at www.apci.org.uk.
- 1.12 It is not the function of the Advisory Panel to endorse any Home Office material or procedures. In the course of its work, the Advisory Panel directly reviews the content of selected individual Home Office COI Reports, but neither the fact that such a review has been undertaken, nor any comments made, should be taken to imply endorsement of the material. Some of the material examined by the Panel relates to countries designated or proposed for designation for the Non-Suspensive Appeals (NSA) list. In such cases, the Panel's work should not be

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2. Geography

2.01 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that:

“The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a land-locked country in the Horn of Africa, covering an area of 1,133,380 sq km (437,600sq miles). Ethiopia’s western neighbour is Sudan; to the south it has a common border with Kenya; and to the east and south-east lie the Republic of Djibouti and the Somali Democratic Republic. To the north and north-east lies the State of Eritrea.” [1a] (p423) The 1994 Constitution established a federal structure of nine autonomous ethnically-based “national states” and the federal capital territory. [9] (p18) The CIA World Factbook, last updated in June 2005, estimated the population at 73,053,286 in 2005 and stated that: “Estimates for this country explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected.” [7] (p2) Lonely Planet, in its guide to Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti published in November 2000 stated that: “Over 90% of the people inhabit the countryside. Life expectancy is currently 49 years.” [33] (p44) Africa South of the Sahara in its 2005 Report on Ethiopia noted that the largest city is the federal capital Addis Ababa. Other principal towns are Dire Dawa, Nazret, Harar, Mekele, Jimma, Dessie, Bahir Dahr and Debrezit. [1a] (p436)

2.02 The Lonely Planet, in its guide to Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti, published in November 2000 stated that: “Amharic, an indigenous language, is Semitic (like Arabic) in origin, and is the national language...English is generally only spoken by the urban educated population.” [33] (p55) The US State Department Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: “There were more than 80 ethnic groups living in the country. The Oromo were the largest single group, accounting for 40 percent of the population. Although many groups influenced the political and cultural life of the country, Amharas and Tigrayans from the northern highlands played a dominant role. The federal system has boundaries drawn roughly along major ethnic lines, and regional states had much greater control over their affairs. Most political parties remained primarily ethnically based.” [3a] (p19) The nine autonomous national states established under the 1994 Constitution, broadly reflecting regional ethnic boundaries, are those of the Afar, Amhara, Benishangul/Gumuz, Gambela, Harari, Oromia, Somalia, Southern and Tigray (or Tigray) peoples. [9] (p18) The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that: “About 45% of the population are Muslims and about 40% belong to the Ethiopian Orthodox (Tewahido) Church. There are also significant Evangelical Protestant and Roman Catholic communities...Virtually all of Ethiopia’s small Jewish population had been evacuated by the Israeli Government by mid-1999. It has been estimated that 5%-15% of the population follow animist rites and beliefs.” [1a] (p446)

2.03 Europa in its 2005 web report states that: “The climate is mainly temperate because of the high plateau terrain, with an average annual temperature of 13°C (55°F), abundant rainfall in some years and low humidity. The lower country and valley gorges are very hot and subject to recurrent drought.” [1d]

For further information on geography, refer to Europa Yearbook, source [1].

3. The economy

3.01 The CIA World Factbook, last updated 30 June 2005, states that:

“Ethiopia’s poverty-stricken economy is based on agriculture, which accounts for half of GDP, 60% of exports, and 80% of total employment. The agricultural sector suffers from frequent drought and poor cultivation practices. Coffee is critical to the Ethiopian economy with exports of some \$156 million in 2002, but historically low prices have seen many farmers switching to qat to supplement their income. The war with Eritrea in 1998-2000 and recurrent drought have buffeted the economy, in particular coffee production. In November 2001 Ethiopia qualified for debt relief from the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. Under Ethiopia’s land tenure system, the government owns all land and provides long-term leases to the tenants; the system continues to hamper growth in the industrial sector as entrepreneurs are unable to use land as collateral for loans. Drought struck again late in 2002, leading to a 2% decline in GDP in 2003. Normal weather patterns late in 2003 helped agricultural and GDP growth recover in 2004.” [7] (p6)

3.02 Africa South of the Sahara 2005, Report on Ethiopia stated that: “Annual inflation averaged 2.2% during 1995-2003...The Ethiopian birr has been devalued progressively since 1992, moving from US\$1 = 2.07 birr to US\$1 = 8.59 birr in March 2003 and to US \$1 = 8.63 birr in April 2004.” [1a] (p434)

3.03 Europa in it’s online report (accessed 15 July 2005) states that: “Ethiopia uses its own solar calendar; the Ethiopian year 1997 began on 11 September 2004.” [1e]

DROUGHT AND FAMINE

3.04 Africa South of the Sahara 2005, Report on Ethiopia stated that: “Acute, perennial food shortages remain the most immediate and protracted economic problem confronting the majority of Ethiopians...most rural communities remain highly vulnerable, owing to acute poverty and the vagaries of weather and pests.” [1a] (p435)

3.05 The Human Rights Watch 2004 Report states that:

“Drought, coupled with systemic economic problems periodically, devastates large areas of Ethiopia, especially the southern and eastern lowlands. In 2003, over thirteen million people (about one-fifth of the population) in those areas became dependent on international food assistance. Several international aid groups blamed the Ethiopian government and foreign government donors for exacerbating conditions by relying on emergency relief rather than investing in infrastructure and promoting family planning programs.” [8b] (p3)

3.06 The same report stated that: “the European Union warned that foreign aid might be reduced if Ethiopia continues to defy the border commission ruling, but no donor had reduced foreign financial support by the end of 2003.... Most foreign assistance to Ethiopia in 2003 (for example, almost 88 percent of the U.S. assistance of U.S. \$ 531 million) was for famine relief.” [8b] (p4)

- 3.07 More information and maps of the suspected famine/malnutrition zones are available on the UN Reliefweb website. [27]

4. History

ORIGINS OF ETHIOPIA

- 4.01 The Africa South of the Sahara, 2005, stated that:

“Ethiopia’s history as an organized and independent polity dates from about the beginning of the second century with a kingdom at Axum in the northern regional state (killil) of Tigrai. Menelik (who died in 1913) presided over the first stages of Ethiopia’s modernization; Haile Selassie (emperor during 1930-74) turned Ethiopia into a centralized autocracy. The process was interrupted by the Italian invasion and conquest of 1935-41, but after Ethiopia’s liberation, a by-product of Italy’s involvement in the Second World War, Haile Selassie continued a largely successful policy of centralization...A series of army mutinies, started in January 1974, were paralleled by civilian strikes. Attempts at reform by a new Prime Minister made little progress, and from June a co-ordinating committee of the armed forces began to arrest leading officials. Haile Selassie was deposed in September, with hardly a murmur of dissent, and was murdered the following year”. [1a] (p424-425)

THE DERGUE AND THE “RED TERROR”

- 4.02 The Europa World Yearbook 2003, Report on Ethiopia, stated that:

“The 1974 revolution was organised by an Armed Forces Co-ordinating Committee, known popularly as the Dergue (Shadow), which established a Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC), led by Brig.-Gen Teferi Benti. In December [1974] Ethiopia was declared a socialist state. A radical programme of social and economic reforms led to widespread unrest, however, and in February 1977 Lt-Col Mengistu Haile Mariam executed Teferi and his closest associates, and replaced him as Chairman of PMAC and as Head of State”. [1c] (p1566) The Africa South of the Sahara in its 2004 Report noted that, “He subsequently launched, originally on behalf of his ally MEISON, the ‘red terror’ campaign, aimed at eliminating the EPRP. Tens of thousands were killed or tortured, particularly in urban areas.” [1c] (p1566)

- 4.03 The Report further stated that: “Numerous groups, encouraged by the confusion resulting from the 1974 revolution, launched armed insurgencies against the Government...US-sponsored negotiations held in late 1989 between representatives of the Ethiopian government and the EPLF [Eritrean People’s Liberation Front] proved inconclusive.” [1c] (p1566)
- 4.04 The Africa South of the Sahara, 2005, stated that: “In January 1991 the EPRDF [Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front] produced a new political programme which did not mention Marxism and was moderate and democratic enough to be acceptable to the USA. As the guerrillas closed in on Addis Ababa, Mengistu’s armies ceased to fight. On May 21 [1991] Mengistu fled to Zimbabwe where he was granted political asylum.” [1a] (p426)
- 4.05 Amnesty International stated in its 2005 Report on Ethiopia: “Trials continued of over 2,000 members of the former Dergue government detained since 1991 on charges including genocide. Several death sentences were imposed; no executions were reported.” [6b] (p1)

Refer to Africa South of the Sahara (source [1a]) for more detailed history of events prior to 1995.

1995 CPR & NATIONAL STATE ELECTIONS; DERGUE TRIALS

4.06 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that:

“In May 1995...elections to the Federal Parliamentary Assembly (the House of People’s Representatives) and to the Regional State Councils, which elect representatives to the upper house (the House of the Federation)...The EPRDF and its allies won an overwhelming victory, and Meles Zenawi, as Chairman of the EPRDF and of the TPLF [Tigray People’s Liberation Front], which remained the dominant element in the EPRDF, became the Prime Minister in August 1995; Dr Nigasso Gidada of the OPDO was elected President...In Tigray region the TPLF took all seats for both the federal and state assemblies; EPRDF parties were equally successful in the Amhara, Oromia and Southern regions...the EPRDF won all 92 local assembly seats [in Addis Ababa]...in Afar and Somali regions, after postponements, pro-EPRDF parties won narrow victories... overall the election results were seriously undermined by the decision of most opposition parties to boycott, claiming insufficient access to media, extensive arrest and harassment of their officials and closure of party offices. International observers generally agreed with the criticisms; there was a consensus that whilst the elections represented an advance on past experience, they were not entirely free or fair.” [1a] (p428)

4.07 The Europa World Yearbook 2003, Report on Ethiopia, stated that:

“On 21 August 1995 legislative power was transferred from the transitional Council of Representatives to the Federal Parliamentary Assembly. On 22 August the transitional administration was terminated, and the country’s new Constitution and designation as the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia were formally instituted...Meles nominated a 17-member Council of Ministers, which was duly approved by the Federal Parliamentary Assembly.” [1c] (p1567)

4.08 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that:

“The trial of 69 former senior officials (23 in absentia, including Mengistu) on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes began in December 1994, although proceedings have been adjourned on numerous occasions.... In February 1997 the special prosecutor’s office announced that it was to try a further 5,198 people on charges of genocide and war crimes, nearly 3,000 of them in absentia. These trials proceeded more quickly with some 60% of the accused being sentenced to up to 20 years’ “rigorous imprisonment” by mid-2003, and were due to be completed by 2004.” [1a] (p429)

4.09 The Europa World Yearbook 2003, Report on Ethiopia, stated that:

“During late 1995 and early 1996 the Meles administration was criticized for its harsh treatment of opposition activists. In June 1996 Dr Taye Wolde Semayat, the Secretary-General of the Ethiopian Teachers’ Association, was arrested with several associates and accused of leading a clandestine political organization (the Ethiopian National Patriotic Front – ENPF), which had allegedly been responsible for several terrorist acts”. [1c] (p1567) The Africa

South of the Sahara 2003 noted that Dr Taye was “given a widely criticized 15-year prison sentence in July 1999; on appeal this was reduced to five years, and he was released in May 2002.” [1a] (p428)

- 4.10 The Europa World Yearbook 2003, Report on Ethiopia, further stated that:

“The Somali-based al-Ittihad al-Islam (Islamic Union Party – which sought independence for Ethiopia’s Ogaden province) claimed responsibility for bomb explosions at hotels in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa in early 1996, and for the attempted assassination in July of Dr Abdul-Mejid Hussen, the Minister of Transport and Communications. Government forces launched reprisal attacks on al-Ittihad bases in Somalia on numerous occasions during 1996-98, resulting in the deaths of several hundred al-Ittihad members.” [1c] (p1567)

- 4.11 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that: “The extent of corruption began to cause concern in 1996 when the then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Tamirat Layne, was dismissed and detained; he was finally sentenced to 18 years’ imprisonment four years later. Hundreds of officials in different killils have been removed since 1996, following gimgema [extensive self-awareness] sessions.” [1a] (p430)

BORDER CONFLICT WITH ERITREA 1998-2005

- 4.12 The Europa World Yearbook 2003, Report on Ethiopia, stated that: “In late 1997 relations with Eritrea deteriorated, following that country’s adoption of a new currency (to replace the Ethiopian birr) and the subsequent disruption of cross-border trade. Fighting between Ethiopian and Eritrean troops erupted in early May 1998, with both countries accusing the other of having invaded their territory.” [1c] (p1569)

- 4.13 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Ethiopia Report stated that: “Despite close links between Prime Minister Meles and President Issaias Afewerki of Eritrea, a minor border dispute in May 1998 escalated. Following the death of several Eritrean troops at Badme, Eritrea dispatched substantial reinforcements, taking over three areas previously under Ethiopian administration, and advancing into Ethiopia. When Eritrea refused to withdraw it’s forces, Ethiopia promptly declared war.” [1a] (p431)

- 4.14 The same Report additionally notes that: “In June [1998] Ethiopia began a process of expelling 70,000 Eritreans, a move strongly criticized by Amnesty International and other human rights organizations. Eritrea subsequently encouraged a similar number of Ethiopians to leave Eritrea.” [1a] (p431)

- 4.15 An Amnesty International Report issued in January 1999 stated that:

“Ethiopia’s policy of deporting people of Eritrean origin after war between the two countries broke out in May 1998 has now developed into a systematic, country-wide operation to arrest and deport anyone of full or part Eritrean descent.” The report further noted that: “At least 22,000 Ethiopians have returned to Ethiopia from Eritrea since May, most after losing their jobs and being rendered destitute as a result of the hostilities, and some in fear of reprisals. No evidence was found to support Ethiopia’s allegations that 40,000 of its citizens have been seriously ill-treated and forcibly deported from Eritrea since May 1998.” [6f] (p1)

- 4.16 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Ethiopia Report stated that:

“OAU mediation efforts continued with little success. Ethiopia continued to insist on Eritrea’s withdrawal from all Ethiopian territory before negotiations; Eritrea refused to withdraw from what it described as its own territory...On 25 May [2000] the Eritrean government announced that would withdraw its troops from all disputed areas. A cessation of hostilities was signed in Algiers on 18 June [2000]. The terms were largely favourable to Ethiopia and included a return to the pre-May 1998 border positions, a 25-km wide demilitarized security zone inside the Eritrean frontier, the deployment of a UN peace-keeping force and the future demarcation of the border.” [1a] (p431)

- 4.17 The same Report stated that: “In September 2000 the UN Security Council approved the deployment of a 4,200-strong UN Mission In Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), to police the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ); in April 2001 UNMEE was able to announce that both Eritrea and Ethiopia had withdrawn all forces from the TSZ.” [1a] (p431-432)

- 4.18 The Europa World Yearbook 2003, Report on Ethiopia, stated that: “On 12 December 2000 Ethiopia and Eritrea signed an agreement in Algiers which formally brought an end to the conflict.” [1c] (p1570)

- 4.19 Human Rights Watch, in its 2004 Report stated that:

“In late August 2002, Eritrea repatriated 279 Ethiopian prisoners of war (POWs), stating that it had thereby returned all POWs, but the Ethiopian government accused Eritrea of still holding prisoners in undisclosed locations. It demanded information about seventy-three police and militia members who remained unaccounted for, and about a pilot who had been paraded through the streets of the Eritrean capital after his plane was shot down in 1998.” [8b] (p4)

- 4.20 The Europa World Yearbook 2003, Report on Ethiopia, stated that:

“In early March 2003 the Border Commission reported to the UN Security Council that Ethiopia’s requests for changes to the border ruling in order to ‘take better account of human and physical geography’, threatened to undermine the peace process as a whole. Despite Ethiopia’s claims that it had been promised that demarcations could be refined, later in March the Boundary Commission categorically ruled Badme to be in Eritrean territory, thus rejecting Ethiopia’s territorial claim over the town.” [1c] (p1570) Keesings Record of World Events noted in its April 2003 digest that: “The Ethiopian Government on April 4 [2003] voiced its opposition to an independent boundary ruling which had placed the symbolic village of Badme, currently administered by Ethiopia, within Eritrea...the Information Ministry statement said that the Ethiopian government ‘would exert utmost efforts to legally and peacefully correct the Commission’s misinterpretations of the border ruling’ and accused the Commission of an ‘unfair tendency’ in implementing the ruling.” [31] (p45330)

NATIONAL ELECTIONS MAY 2005

- 4.21 Amnesty International, in its report dated 29 April 2005, stated that: “On 15 May 2005, Ethiopians will cast their votes for the House of Peoples’ Representatives

(the federal or national parliament), with 547 seats. They will at the same time vote for the nine Regional State Councils and two City Councils. The interim results are due to be announced in mid-June, and the final result in September after the postponed Somali Region elections in August.” [6a] (p1)

4.22 The report goes on to state that:

“This will be the third general election in accordance with the 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and the Electoral Law of 1995. About 25 million voters aged 18 and over have been registered in an estimated population of 72 million. They will vote in about 30,000 polling stations. Some 36 political parties have registered to compete for the federal parliament or regional and city councils, with 1,845 candidates (including 273 women), for the federal parliament, and 3,662 candidates for the regional and city councils. Registration of voters and candidates of the political parties and independent candidates ended at the beginning of February 2005, when election campaigning commenced. Many of the registered political parties are affiliated to the ruling Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) coalition. The EPRDF and its affiliated parties together control the current federal parliament and regional and city councils, having gained over 95 percent of all seats in the previous elections in 2000. Currently there are two opposition coalitions comprising both national and regional opposition parties – the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF) and the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD).” [6a] (p1-2)

4.23 The BBC, in an article dated 28 March 2005, noted that: “Fifteen people have been arrested for registering children as young as three years old to vote in May’s election, say Ethiopian polling officials. The fraud was discovered in Hadiya district, south of Addis Ababa, where elections in 2000 had to be re-run because of similar abuses.” [4a]

4.24 The BBC, in an article dated 27 April 2005, noted that:

“Opposition leaders in Ethiopia have accused the ruling party of killing and intimidating their supporters ahead of parliamentary polls on 15 May”, and then went on to report: “At least two opposition supporters had been shot and more than 40 jailed and tortured in the last month, they said.” The report also added “Information Minister Bereket Simon rejected the allegations as “propaganda” and absolutely false.” Then added: “The National Elections Board said it would probe the complaints, although it had not been formally told about them.” [4b]

4.25 The BBC reported in an article dated 6 May 2005:

“Ethiopia’s Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has accused opposition parties of fomenting ethnic hatred ahead of general elections on 15 May. In a national television address, he compared opposition tactics to those used in the Rwandan genocide. ‘The Ethiopian opposition is following the same trend to create havoc and hatred’, Mr Meles said, AFP reports. Last week the prime minister’s party denied accusations that it was killing and intimidating opposition supporters. Mr Meles was re-elected in parliamentary elections in 2000, following Ethiopia’s first multi-party elections in 1995.” [4c]

4.26 The BBC, in an article dated 15 May 2005, stated that: “Ethiopians have flocked in numbers to cast their ballots in an election which is being regarded as a crucial

test of the country's fledgling democracy. Hundreds of people lined up at polling stations with some of the queues extending to adjacent streets. Security has been tightened, but the chairman of the national elections board says voting is going on smoothly." [4d]

4.27 The BBC reported in an article dated 11 June 2005:

"Ethiopia's Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has defended a security crackdown which saw 26 protesters shot dead in the country's capital, Addis Ababa." It went on to say: "Speaking to the Reuters news agency, Mr Meles said he regretted the loss of life but added 'things were beginning to get out of control'. Adding, 'It was prudent to stop this with forceful action', he said. Mr Meles spoke as rival parties signed a deal backing a call for a probe into claims of fraud in recent elections." The report also noted: "A week of protests against claims of electoral fraud ended in bloodshed on Wednesday. Mr Meles said he remained ready to take 'preventative action' to preserve calm. Both the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front and the two main opposition coalitions have now backed an inquiry into electoral fraud claims." [4e]

4.28 The BBC reported in an article dated 13 June 2005:

"More than 3,000 people have been arrested in Ethiopia, since disputed elections last month, human rights workers say. The arrests have intensified since protests were violently suppressed last week, said an official with the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO). At least 36 people died when security forces fired at stone-throwing protesters, alleging fraud. The European Union has called together political leaders to defuse tensions. All parties signed an agreement on Friday to undertake a joint probe into complaints of voting irregularities. But the opposition alleged the government could not be trusted – though it later withdrew the comments. Observers say there is still considerable tension, as the government decides whether it can live with the outcome of an election that has apparently left it with considerably reduced authority.... Meanwhile, shops and cafes have reopened in the capital, Addis Ababa, after being closed following last week's violence." [4f]

4.29 The BBC reported in an article dated 14 June 2005:

"Ethiopian political leaders have signed a declaration renewing a deal to try to end violence and launch an investigation into election complaints. At least 36 people died last week when security forces fired at protesters, alleging fraud in the polls. Opposition leader Hailu Shawel has been freed from house arrest, the European Union's Tim Clarke told the BBC. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has extended a ban on demonstrations until final results are announced on 8 July." [4g]

4.30 The BBC reported in the same article:

"Friday's EU-brokered agreement – signed by both the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and the two main opposition coalitions – broke down when the opposition alleged the government could not be trusted – though it later withdrew the comments. The electoral board will now begin investigations on Wednesday into more than 300 complaints in the 547 constituencies. Three weeks after polling, final election results have not been declared – although provisional results suggest the ruling party had won a

majority of seats in the parliament but had been comprehensively defeated in the capital, Addis Ababa.” [4g]

4.31 The BBC reported in an article dated 24 June 2005:

“Authorities in Ethiopia say they have released nearly 2,700 people who were detained after election protests turned violent earlier this month. Federal police said those freed were found to be ‘minor offenders’ who did not deserve prosecution. They had been held at a military camp south of the capital, Addis Ababa. Hundreds more were still being detained, police said. At least 36 people died in early June when police opened fire on protesters. Thousands of opposition figures, activists and supporters were arrested at the same time, after three days of protests against alleged electoral fraud in parliamentary polls held in May. The decision to free many of them came after foreign diplomats visited the military camp where they were being held to check on conditions. Irish, Swedish and American diplomats visited the camp at Ziway, about 150km (90 miles) south of Addis Ababa, on Wednesday. They said they saw about 2,000 prisoners there, but hundreds of detainees were reportedly freed before the envoys were allowed to inspect the site.” [4h]

4.32 The BBC reported in an article dated 30 June 2005:

“Teams of fraud poll investigators in Ethiopia have begun visiting the 135 constituencies where the result of May’s election is fiercely disputed. At least 36 people were killed and thousands arrested in protests over the poll, won by the governing party of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Opposition parties say many of their members are still in prison. The 26 teams fanning out across the country include representatives from political parties.... Each team will also have two representatives from the National Electoral Board, as well as international observers. They will spend about three days in each location, calling witnesses and hearing complaints about the way the election was conducted. International observers will be supplied by the African Union, the Carter Centre and the European Union (EU). The opposition parties are still angry that a large number of their members are still imprisoned. Although about 3,800 have been released it is believed that at least 500 remain in jail. The opposition Coalition for Unity and Democracy complains that it is unable to field its key activists because they have not been released.” [4i]

4.33 The BBC reported in an article dated 6 July 2005:

“Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has defended the use of force against protesters in Addis Ababa last month. Thirty-six people are believed to have died when the security forces opened fire on demonstrators angry at the alleged rigging of May’s elections. Mr Meles told the BBC that shootings would be investigated, but police had a right to defend themselves. ‘When an unconstitutional grab of power is attempted, every government has the right and obligation to stop it.’ The international community on which Ethiopia is heavily dependent for aid had hoped May’s elections would mark another milestone in Ethiopia’s transition to democracy.” [4j]

4.34 The BBC reported in an article dated 8 July 2005:

“The first official results from Ethiopia’s disputed May elections show the ruling party and the opposition won roughly the same number of seats. With more

than half the results announced, the EPRDF of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has a narrow lead. The National Election Board said it was investigating allegations of fraud in up to 200 seats. The opposition rejected initial results, which said the EPRDF had retained its majority. Protests at alleged fraud left at 36 people dead in the capital, Addis Ababa.” [4k]

- 4.35 IRIN News reported in an article on 12 July 2005:

“Ethiopia has rejected accusations of cracking down on independent media after the disputed elections, insisting that it is upholding the law of the land. Authorities also criticized international media watchdogs, saying they were ill-informed about what was actually taking place in Ethiopia. ‘There is no crackdown’, government spokesman, Zemedkun Teckle, said on Tuesday. ‘We are ensuring that the media abide by the rules and regulations of the land. The [international] media organizations are not considering what is going on practically on the ground, and don’t care what these newspapers are doing’. The comments were made in response to criticism by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), which accused the government of trying to stifle the press. ‘CPJ is greatly alarmed by the government’s use of repressive laws to harass and intimidate journalists trying to do their jobs,’ said Ann Cooper, executive director of the organization. ‘Ethiopian authorities must publicly recognise the rights of journalists to inform the public and report critically without fear of reprisal’.” [14a]

- 4.36 The report then went on to say:

“According to the CPJ, Ethiopian authorities have pressed criminal charges against many editors from the Amharic language press for covering the aftermath of the 15 May parliamentary election. At least eight local editors are awaiting trial on charges related to their work during this period. Others have reported being harassed or intimidated as a result of their coverage. The defence ministry and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church are among the bodies that have taken action against private newspapers over their post-election reporting.” [14a]

EVENTS OF 2001-2005

- 4.37 IRIN News reported on 4 Dec 2001: “The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, signed a declaration of friendship and partnership with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Monday and thanked Russia for its longstanding and friendly relationship with Ethiopia. Prime Minister Meles made his comments during a three-day trip to Russia for which he said the main purpose was to ‘express my thanks to Russia for staying with us in times of need’.” [14b]
- 4.38 The BBC stated in a report dated 18 April 2001: “The United Nations has said a buffer zone between the former warring neighbours in the Horn of Africa has now been officially established....The zone is to be administered by Eritrea, but patrolled by UN peacekeepers until the demarcation of the disputed border is confirmed by an international boundary commission.” [4l]
- 4.39 IRIN News reported on 6 Dec 2001:
- “The Eritrean government has accused Ethiopian armed forces of attacking an Eritrean Police and militia post inside the Temporary Security Zone, set up to

separate the two armies, according to a press Statement by the Eritrean Commission for Coordination with the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) dated 5 December. The statement said that the Eritrean Commissioner with UNMEE, Ambassador Andebrhan Woldegiorgis had written to UN Special Representative Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, protesting the latest violations of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities in the central sector.” [14c]

- 4.40 The report then went on to say: “ The Commissioner’s letter said that this attack ‘represents a dangerous provocation jeopardizing the peace process’ and noted that the Ethiopian army has recently intensified its military activities, and ‘increased incursions into additional sovereign Eritrean territory’, said the statement. The statement is just the latest in series of accusation and counter accusation between the two Horn of African countries”. [14c]
- 4.41 IRIN News reported on 12 Dec 2001: “The number of AIDS orphans in Ethiopia has reached the one million mark, according to the Ministry of Health, placing an even greater strain on the country’s already limited and stretched social services. Ethiopia has the third largest population in the world with the HIV virus. Only India and South Africa have a greater number. ‘Tackling AIDS is the most serious problem that Ethiopia now faces’, Ministry of Health spokesperson Amsale Yelma told IRIN.” [14d]
- 4.42 A BBC report on 3 October 2002 stated: “The decline in world coffee prices has led to a crisis for growers in Ethiopia, who describe it as the birthplace of coffee. More than one million Ethiopian coffee farmers, accounting for nearly 15 million households, have been affected by the continuing fall in the price paid to coffee producers globally.” [4m]
- 4.43 The BBC reported on 29 November 2002:
- “More than 1,200 Eritrean prisoners of war held by Ethiopia for more than two years have returned to their home territory. They were released by the Ethiopian authorities several days ago and have been travelling in a convoy of 27 buses to the border from their detention centre some 1,000km away....The International Committee of the Red Cross has said it wants to work with the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments on the cases of some individual PoWs still being held by either country....However, it said all registered prisoners from the conflict – which ended two years ago – had now been repatriated....The last group of registered Ethiopian prisoners was sent home three months ago.” [4n]
- 4.44 The BBC reported on 7 December 2002: “The Ethiopian Prime Minister, Meles Zenawi, has made an urgent appeal for 1.4 million metric tons of food aid, as his country faces a famine potentially as severe as the 1984 crisis....The United Nations says it has enough food to last until early next year, but the needs for the rest of 2003 are still to be met.... Across Ethiopia, just over 11 million people are facing starvation.” [4o]
- 4.45 IRIN News reported on 8 October 2003:
- “The Ethiopian government faced calls on Wednesday to step up the distribution of contraceptives to help curb its spiralling population....Duah Owusu-Sarfo, acting head of the UN’s Population Fund (UNFPA), said the rapid birth rate was ‘undermining’ the economic recovery of the impoverished

nation....'We need to make sure the rate of growth of the population is commensurate with the development of the country', he told a launch of the latest State of the World Population report in Addis Ababa....The report notes that the Ethiopian population has now topped 70 million....Ethiopia – reeling from a humanitarian crisis affecting 13 million people – has the third largest population in Africa. By 2050 it is estimated it will have reached 171 million.” [14e]

- 4.46 IRIN News reported on 30 June 2004: “In what ranks as one of the most extensive aid programmes in Ethiopia, five million impoverished farmers are to be targeted under a government-led ‘productive safety-nets’ scheme to help protect and insulate them from the effects of drought and poor harvests....Under the scheme, public-works programmes like road building will be initiated country-wide whereby poor rural communities will be paid for work in food or cash.” [14f]
- 4.47 A BBC report on 27 April 2005 stated: “At least 82 people have been killed and tens of thousands made homeless after devastating floods swept through south-eastern Ethiopia, say officials....More than 30 villages were submerged after the Wabe Shebelle river near Gode in the Somali region burst its banks following days of heavy rains.” [4p]
- 4.48 On 9 June 2005, Amnesty International reported that:

“After three days of mass arrests and shootings of demonstrators in Addis Ababa, leaving at least 26 dead and over 100 injured, Amnesty International has issued an appeal on behalf of over 1,500 students and other demonstrators who are at risk of torture....Amnesty International fears that several hundred Addis Ababa University students, who were arrested during demonstrations earlier this week, are being held incommunicado without charge, and are being beaten, forced to do harsh exercises, and denied adequate food and medical treatment.” [6e]
- 4.49 The report then went on to say: “The students were protesting the announcement of the provisional results of the parliamentary elections of 15 May by the National Election Board of Ethiopia....The protests defied the Prime Minister’s one month post-election ban on demonstrations.” [6e]

5. State structures

THE CONSTITUTION

- 5.01 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that: "In December [1994], the Constituent Assembly ratified the draft Constitution." [1a] (p427) The CIA World Factbook, last updated on 30 June 2005, noted that the Constitution became effective as of 22 August 1995. [7] (p4)
- 5.02 The Constitution establishes a federal and democratic state structure and all sovereign power resides in the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land. Human rights and freedoms, emanating from the nature of mankind, are inviolable and inalienable. State and religion are separate and there shall be no state religion. The state shall not interfere in religious matter and vice-versa. All Ethiopian languages shall enjoy equal state recognition; Amharic shall be the working language of the Federal Government. [9] (p3-5)
- 5.03 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Ethiopia Report stated that:
- "Every Ethiopian national, without discrimination based on colour, race, nation, nationality, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or other status, has the following rights: on the attainment of 18 years of age, to vote in accordance with the law; to be elected to any office at any level of government; to freely express oneself without interference; to hold opinions without interference; to engage in economic activity and to pursue a livelihood anywhere within the national territory; to choose his or her means of livelihood, occupation and profession; and to own private property." [1a] (p442)
- 5.04 The Report further noted that:
- "Every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia has the following rights: an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession; the right to speak, to write and to develop its own language; the right to express, to develop and to promote its culture, and to preserve its history; the right to a full measure of self-government which includes the right to establish institutions of government in the territory that it inhabits. Women shall, in the enjoyment of rights and protections provided for by this Constitution, have equal right with men." [1a] (p442)
- 5.05 The 1994 Constitution requires the Government to establish a Human Rights Commission and Office of the Ombudsman. [9] (p24) The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that: "Legislation approving both bodies was finally passed in 2000, but no appointments had been made by mid-2004." [1a] (p429) The US Department of State's Human Rights Report 2004 confirmed that: "In August [2004] the Government named Kassa Gebre Haiwot as Human Rights Commissioner and Abay Tekele as Ombudsman. Neither entity was fully operational by year's end [2004]." [3a] (p15)

CITIZENSHIP AND NATIONALITY

- 5.06 According to Article 6 of the Constitution any person shall be an Ethiopian national where both or either parent is Ethiopian and foreign nationals may

acquire Ethiopian nationality, although there is no provision for dual nationality. It also affirms that the law shall determine particulars relating to nationality. [9] (p4)

POLITICAL SYSTEM

POLITICAL OVERVIEW

- 5.07 The CIA World Factbook, last updated on 30 June 2005, noted that Ethiopia is a Federal Republic with nine ethnically-based states and two self-governing administrations. Nationally the Government is split into executive and legislative branches. [7] (p4)

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

- 5.08 The CIA World Factbook, last updated on 30 June 2005, noted that:

“The Chief of State is President Girma Woldegiorgis since 8 October 2001. The Head of the Government is Prime Minister Meles Zenawi who took office in August 1995. The President is elected by the House of the People’s Representatives for a six-year term, the Prime Minister is designated by the party in power following the legislative elections. The Ethiopian Cabinet is known as the Council of Ministers as provided for by the 1994 Constitution; Ministers are selected by the Prime Minister and then have to be approved by the House of People’s Representatives.” [7] (p4)

- 5.09 The BBC country profile on Ethiopia updated on 9 July 2005, noted that Prime Minister Meles Zenawi joined the fight against the Mengistu regime in the 1970’s. “Initially a Marxist-Leninist, by the 1990’s he had publicly become a proponent of the free market and parliamentary democracy. Upon Mengistu’s overthrow, he was chosen as transitional head of state and was one of the architects of the 1994 constitution, which provided for a federal republic with ethnically-based regions. In 1995 he became Prime Minister.” [4s]

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

- 5.10 The CIA World Factbook, last updated on 30 June 2005, noted that:

“Ethiopia has a bicameral Parliament which consists of the House of Federation (Upper Chamber) which consists of 108 seats, and the House of People’s Representatives (Lower Chamber) which consists of 548 seats. Members of the House of Federation are chosen by state assemblies to serve five-year terms. Members of the House of the People’s Representatives are elected by popular vote from single-member districts to serve five-year terms.” [7] (p5)

ETHIOPIAN POLITICS IN GENERAL

- 5.11 The Constitution provides for the right of peaceful assembly and free speech. [9] (p10-11) The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: “Organizers of large public meetings or demonstrations must notify the Government 72 hours in advance and obtain a permit. There were several reports during the year that permits were denied to opposition parties. Opposition parties also reported long, unexplained delays by the Government in issuing permits and last minute revocations of permits.” [3a] (p11)

5.12 The Constitution provides for freedom of association and the right to engage in unrestricted peaceful political activity. [9] (p11-14)

5.13 The US State Department's Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

"The Government required political parties to register with the National Election Board (NEB). Parties that did not participate in two consecutive national elections were subject to deregistration. There were approximately 69 organized political parties; 13 were national parties, and the remainder operated only in limited areas. There were no reports during the year [2004] that any political party had its registration revoked." [3a] (p11)

ETHNICITY IN ETHIOPIAN POLITICS

(See also Human Rights – Ethnic Groups, and Annex B – Main Political parties).

5.14 The US State Department's Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

"There were more than 80 ethnic groups living in the country. The Oromo were the largest single group, accounting for 40 percent of the population. Although many groups influenced the political and cultural life of the country, Amharas and Tigrayans from the northern highlands played a dominant role. The federal system has boundaries drawn roughly along major ethnic lines, and regional states had much greater control over their affairs. Most political parties remained primarily ethnically based." [3a] (p19)

5.15 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that "Numerous political parties emerged, mostly ethnically based. More than 100 parties had appeared by early 1993, although less than one-half of these contested the May 1995 elections. As Tigrayans constitute no more than 5% of the population, the EPRDF fostered parallel parties or 'democratic organizations' with which it could form alliances." [1a] (p426-427)

THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLES' REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC FRONT

5.16 The US Department of State in its 2005 online country profile of Ethiopia states:

"In July 1991, the EPRDF, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), and others established the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) which was comprised of an 87-member Council of Representatives and guided by a national charter that functioned as a transitional constitution. In June 1992 the OLF withdrew from the government; in March 1993, members of the Southern Ethiopia Peoples' Democratic Coalition left the government." [3e] (p3)

5.17 Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Ethiopia Report stated that:

(In the May 2000 Elections) "The EPRDF, as expected won an overwhelming victory....The Ethiopian-based opposition parties claimed numerous irregularities had occurred, including physical abuse, intimidation of monitors and vote-rigging in the months leading up to the elections the alleged candidates had been refused registration and endorsement, supporters had often been harassed and arrested, local administrators had been partial and the state media had failed to provide promised services." [1a] (p428)

- 5.18 The BBC reported on 8 July 2005: “The first official results from Ethiopia’s disputed May elections show the ruling party and the opposition won roughly the same number of seats....Of the 307 seats declared, the Ethiopia People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) has won 139 seats, the two main opposition groups – CUD and UEDF – got 93 and 42 seats respectively.” [41]

THE OPPOSITION

- 5.19 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: “Although political parties predominantly were ethnically based, opposition parties were engaged in a gradual process of consolidation.” [3a] (p1)

- 5.20 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 also noted that:

“According to observers organized by EHRCO, local U.N. staff, diplomatic missions, political parties, and domestic NGOs, the 2000 national elections and the 2001 regional elections were generally free and fair in most areas but were marred by serious irregularities, including killings, disappearances, voter intimidation and harassment, and unlawful detentions of opposition party supporters, particularly in the Southern Region....Opposition parties accused the NEB of being an instrument of the ruling party and of failing to take meaningful action upon being informed of electoral irregularities, including ballot stuffing, vote count fraud, bribery, killings, beatings, and widespread intimidation and harassment by ruling party supporters during the 2000 and 2001 elections.” [3a] (p13)

- 5.21 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report of 2002 noted that:

“The Government established a donor supported fund for opposition party candidates, provided opposition candidates access to state-owned electronic media, and changed the law to permit civil servants to run for office without first resigning their positions. The Government was willing to engage opponents in open debate at candidate and party forums. Many of these debates were broadcast live on national radio and television and reported on in both government and private newspapers. Free radio broadcast time was set aside for the elections, and 225 independent candidates and 33 political parties made use of it.” [3c] (p20)

- 5.22 However the US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2003 also documented violence during the elections and stated that:

“In the months immediately before the 2001 regional elections, authorities harassed and detained supporters of parties belonging to the SEPDC opposition coalition. Of the 49 SEPDC supporters detained in Hosana and Durame in 2001 who remained in detention for the killing of a policeman and property destruction in Kembatta Tembaro Zone, Oromiya Region, 21 were released for lack of sufficient evidence after spending 3 years in detention. Twenty-eight others remained in detention in Durame prison. In December [2003], the Zonal High Court in Durame found 9 of those 28 persons guilty of the policeman’s murder and sentenced them to life in prison. The status of the other 19 persons detained was unknown at year’s end [2003].” [3b] (p8)

- 5.23 Human Rights Watch, in its 2003 Report, stated that:

“In December 2001, opposition groups in the SNNP State boycotted zonal elections, claiming that their candidates had been denied access to the ballot and had been molested by government party supporters. The chairman of the South Ethiopian Peoples’ Democratic Coalition (SEPDC), Beyene Petros, one of a handful of opposition members of the federal parliament, accused the National Elections Board of having assigned government officials and government party members as election judges. The chairman of the commission deemed the charge without merit and threatened to sue Beyene. In March 2002, people known to be government party functionaries disrupted a meeting of the Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) in Awassa at which members were protesting government acquiescence to revision of the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Police present at the meeting failed to intervene.” [8c] (p4)

UNITED ETHIOPIAN DEMOCRATIC FORCES

5.24 IRIN news reported in August 2003 that:

“Fifteen Ethiopian opposition parties have formed a ‘rainbow coalition’ to challenge the decade-long political hold of the current Government. Veteran politician Dr Beyene Petros told IRIN the newly-formed United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF) was the largest coalition opposition force within the country. Its birth follows a seven-day conference in Washington DC where opposition leaders agreed on a 10-point action plan for the impoverished nation. Beyene, who will chair the UEDF for the first six months, said its primary focus would be to defeat the current Government in the 2005 elections...The coalition group would have a ‘minimal political agenda’ until the organization managed to achieve office. But a central manifesto pledge would be the ‘re-negotiation’ of the controversial boundary ruling that has placed contested territories in Eritrea...Beyene heads the Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy CAFPDE – one of the 15 groups that joined the conference. Among the other main parties are the All Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP), the Oromo National Congress (ONC) and the United Ethiopian Democratic Party (UEDP)...Beyene said a major breakthrough had come in persuading certain opposition groups within the coalition to lay down their arms and pursue their fight through the ballot box...A national council, made up of two officials from each party, will control policy and direction of the UEDF, while a 15-person executive committee will provide leadership. The UEDF will also have a ‘council of elders’ made up of prominent Ethiopians who will act as advisers to both committees.” [14g]

5.25 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2003 noted that: “The OLF and the ONLF have refused to join the [UEDF] coalition.” [3e] (p19)

5.26 The same Report 2003 noted that:

“At year’s end [2003], the UEDF was trying to negotiate a pledge from the Government to allow many of the parties based abroad to return to the country and set up local offices; however, the Government claimed that the coalition had not yet officially informed it of its plans. Prime Minister Meles also publicly said he supported ‘constructive engagement’ with the opposition; however, Meles publicly criticized the opposition for disloyalty and ‘politics of hate’.” [3b] (p19)

5.27 The Report also noted that:

“In September, ruling party cadres threatened to take away land occupied by eight farmers, who were supporters of the United Ethiopia Democratic Party (UEDF), in Masha Woreda, Southern Region. Ruling party cadres told the farmers that opposition party members were not entitled to land and told them to refrain from participating in UEDF activities. When the farmers refused to comply with this demand, they were evicted from their land.” [3b] (p10-11)

THE ALL-ETHIOPIA UNITY PARTY

5.28 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that the “All-Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP) [was] formerly the All Amhara People’s Organization.” [1a] (p444)

5.29 The US State Department Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

“The opposition All Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP) reported that government militia and soldiers killed 1 of their supporters in the period from December 2003 to May 2004. For example, on March 29, government militiamen Gashaw Melese and Dessalegn Damtew reportedly murdered AEUP member Dessalegn Simegn of Ebinet District, South Gondar Zone. On April 29, government militia killed AEUP district council member Hailu Zelleke in Gishe Rabel District. On May 15, government militia murdered AEUP Youth League leader Getiye Alagaw. No actions were taken against the perpetrators by year’s end.” [3a] (p2)

5.30 The same Report noted that:

“AEUP supporters reported attacks by government militia against them escalated during the year. Local officials often turned a blind eye to these attacks or were complicit in them. On May 5, government militia assaulted Habtamu Baye of Seha Tefases Farmers Association in Shebel Berenta District as he returned from an AEUP meeting. On May 6, government militiamen Habte Endale and Bimirew Adal beat AEUP supporter Endashaw Alemu in Enemay District in East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region. On May 13, government militiamen beat AEUP party organizer Damtew Ayele in Rabel District, North Shoa Zone, Amhara Region, according to AEUP reports. No action was taken against those responsible.” [3a] (p3-4)

5.31 The Report also noted that:

“The AEUP reported that on April 27, government militia detained three of its members – Alem Eniyew, Geta Mitiku, and Gebeyu Mitiku – in Enessie District, Amhara Region, for refusing to cancel their AEUP membership. On April 28, Enemay District officials ordered the arrest and imprisonment of five members of AEUP’s executive committee. On May 3, police arrested Mulugeta Wassie in Metchera town, Fentale District, North Shoa Zone, Amhara Region, for distributing AEUP information leaflets.” [3a] (p5-6)

5.32 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, stated that:

“The AAPO was established in 1991 to defend the rights of the Amhara people, which it believed were best served by a unitary Ethiopian state rather than the federation advocated by the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front [EPRDF] (and implemented in the 1995 constitution). The AAPO’s then leader

was jailed from 1994 to 1998, having been convicted of incitement to armed insurrection for making statements which he claimed were within the rights of free speech. The AAPO boycotted the 1995 federal elections but contested those of 2000 in order to retain its party registration (which would otherwise have been withdrawn). It fielded 17 candidates for the House of People's Representatives and won one seat in Addis Ababa." [29] (p168)

COUNCIL OF ALTERNATIVE FORCES FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY IN ETHIOPIA

5.33 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, stated that:

"The CAFPDE was formed in 1993 but was unable to contest the 1995 elections because it was not granted official registration until mid-1996. Chaired by Beyene Petros and including his Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Coalition [SEPDC] among its constituent groupings, it sought to bring together political parties and organizations based on a variety of interests, as well as bodies representing professional groups, to campaign on a pro-human rights and economic liberalization agenda. Originally comprising 30 organizations and groupings, the CAFPDE was reduced to a coalition of five small groupings following the split in December 1999." [29] (p168)

5.34 Political Parties of the World further noted that:

"Beyene Petros successfully contested the 2000 federal elections as a CAFPDE candidate in a constituency where a new election was held on 25 June, after annulment of the May 14 result by the National Electoral Board (which had upheld claims that the conduct of the May elections in this and 13 other southern Ethiopian constituencies was 'undemocratic and not free'). No other CAFPDE candidates were elected (although several other members of parties in the coalition were elected to represent their own parties)." [28] (p168-169)

5.35 The US State Department's Human Rights Report 2002 documented that in April 2001 it was alleged that the army killed four members of the CAFPDE associated with the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Coalition (SEPDC) in Badoacho, Shone Woreda, and that government forces killed at least 11 supporters of the SEPDC in the period leading up to the December 2001 elections. [3c] (p3)

ETHIOPIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

5.36 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, stated that:

"The EDP was formed in 1998 following a split in the All Amhara People's Organization [AAPO]. It fielded 15 candidates for the federal House of People's Representatives in May 2000, winning two seats in Addis Ababa. Its policies included land reforms to benefit peasant farmers. EDP party members (including candidates in current local government elections) were among those targeted by the security forces in May 2001 in a campaign against 'political activists' following the violent suppression of student demonstrations in Addis Ababa." [28] (p169)

UNITED ETHIOPIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

- 5.37 The Africa South of the Sahara its 2005 Report stated that the United Ethiopian Democratic Party (UEDP) was formed in 2003 “by the merger of the United Ethiopian Democratic Unity Party and the Ethiopian Democratic Party.” [1a] (p444)
- 5.38 IRIN news observed in a report dated 14 July 2003 that: the EDP has since joined forces with the Ethiopian Democratic Union Party to form the United Ethiopian Democratic Party (UEDP). Its leader Dr Admasu Gebeyehu said it had some 20,000 members and described it as ‘one of the largest’ political parties in the country. [14h]
- 5.39 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2003 noted that: “On September 30 [2003], six policemen removed the national flag from the office of the United Ethiopia Democratic Party (UEDP) in Masha Woreda, Sheka Zone, Southern Region, and detained UEDP representative Berhanu Hailu in Masha police prison for 3 weeks. He was released after posting \$580 (5,000 birr).” [3b] (p7)

HADIYA NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION

- 5.40 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, documented that:
- “The HNDO, founded in 1991, is a regionally-registered party associated with several wider alliances promoted by its leader Beyene Petros (see Prominent People). His outspoken criticisms of government encroachment on human rights and political freedoms made him one of the most prominent opposition figures in Ethiopian parliamentary politics in 2001. The HNDO won 5 seats in the federal House of People’s Representatives in 2000, although Beyene Petros himself stood in a neighbouring constituency as a candidate of the CAFDE. All the HNDO deputies were, like Beyene Petros himself, returned in new elections held on June 25 after the annulment of the 14 May 2000 results by the National Electoral Board.” [28] (p169)

OROMO LIBERATION FRONT

- 5.41 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, noted that:
- “Formed in 1975, the OLF operated through different branches with little central leadership, having a minor contribution to the military struggle against the Mengistu regime compared with the contributions of Eritrean forces or the TPLF. Mutual antipathy between the OLF and TPLF led to the creation, under the latter’s auspices, of the rival OPDO in 1990. Initially committed to an independent Oromo state, the OLF said in June 1991 that it would support substantial regional autonomy within a federal Ethiopia, and in August 1991 it accepted four ministerial posts in the TGE headed by Meles Zenawi of what had then become the EPRDF.” [28] (p169) Whereas, the OLF website stated that: “The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) is a political organization established in 1973 by Oromo nationalists to lead the national liberation struggle of the Oromo people against the Abyssinian colonial rule. The emergence of the OLF was a culmination of a century old yearn of the Oromo people to have a strong and unified national organization to lead the struggle....The fundamental objective of the Oromo liberation movement is to exercise the Oromo peoples’ inalienable right to national self-determination to terminate a century of oppression and exploitation, and to form, where possible, a political union with other nations on the basis of

equality, respect for mutual interests and the principle of voluntary associations”.
[36a]

- 5.42 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that: “By the early 1980’s, the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), advocating self-determination for the Oromo people and the use of Oromo culture and language, was gaining support from peasants critical of government efforts to establish co-operatives.” [1a] (p425)
- 5.43 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, stated that “Clashes between members of the OLF and members of OPDO (an EPRDF member party) during the run-up to elections led to a final break with the EPRDF in 1992, after which the OLF went into armed opposition to the Government, carrying out low-level guerilla operations and advocating boycotts of all elections. The OLF also clashed with rival Oromo rebel groups (some of which had come into being through splits in the OLF).” [28] (p169)
- 5.44 The article further noted that: “In July 2000 the OLF held a meeting with three other groups (United Oromo Liberation Front, Oromo Liberation Council and Islamic Front for the Liberation) to discuss joint action against the Ethiopian Government, which had ignored a peace proposal put forward by the OLF in February 2000.” [28] (p169)
- 5.45 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that: “In October 2000 a conference in Eritrea, where the OLF was by this time based, brought together six Oromo opposition parties, including the OLF and the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia, as the United Liberation Forces of Oromia.” [1a] (p427)
- 5.46 Human Rights Watch in its 2003 Report stated that:

“Since the Government banned the OLF a decade before, thousands of alleged OLF members or sympathizers have been arrested, and this trend continued in 2002...As of March [2002], more than 1,700 such prisoners were reportedly held at the Ghimbi central prison, half of them arrested recently and the rest having been there for five to ten years, some without charge. Hundreds more were detained in prisons and police jails across Oromiya State. Prisoners who were released or escaped from incarceration reported severe torture while imprisoned. The Oromiya State Minister for Capacity Building, who fled the country in May [2002], denounced the state Government for indiscriminately accusing the Oromo people of supporting the OLF.” [8c] (p2)
- 5.47 The Report further documented that: “Reliable sources reported that the Eritrean Government was giving logistical support, training, and weapons to OLF guerrillas attempting to infiltrate Ethiopia from Sudan, and to armed Tigrean groups opposed to the current Ethiopian government.” [8c] (p4)
- 5.48 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: “The armed elements of the OLF and ONLF continued to operate within the country and clashed with government forces on several occasions, resulting in the death of an unknown number of civilians.” [3a] (p2)
- 5.49 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2002 noted that:

“On September 11 [2002], a bomb killed four persons at the Tigray Hotel in Addis Ababa. The Government blamed the OLF for the attack and claimed to have arrested the perpetrators. The OLF denied responsibility for the attack...on September 12 [2002], regional police officers took Mesfin Itana, an Oromo youth, from his place of work in the Merkato area because of suspected ties to the OLF. On September 13, police took several young Oromo businessmen from their places of work, and their whereabouts remained unknown at year’s end. On September 18, the police took two brothers, Yilma Mosisa and Gdissa Mosisa, from their home, and their whereabouts also remained unknown at year’s end [2002].” [3c] (p3-4)

- 5.50 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 stated that: “The Government reported that Mesfin Itana, Yilma Mosisa, and Gdissa Mosisa, who were believed to have disappeared after being detained in connection with the September 2002 bombing of the Tigray Hotel in Addis Ababa, were in government custody and awaiting trial....Several young Oromo businessmen remained missing at year’s end (2003).” [3a] (p3-4)

- 5.51 The same Report noted that: “Security forces detained family members of persons sought for questioning by the Government, such as suspected members of OLF.” [3a] (p9)

- 5.52 The Report also noted that: “The independent Teachers Association (ETA) reported that numerous teachers were detained and accused of being OLF sympathizers, many of whom still were in prison at year’s end. Some of the teachers have been in detention for several years without charges.” [3a] (p6)

- 5.53 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2002 observed that:

“On April 9 [2002], security forces arrested at least 60 members of the OLF for conspiring to commit terrorist acts in Oromia. Following the June bombing of the Dire Dawe train station, police detained many young Oromo males without warrants for questioning. Among those detained was Dinkinesh Deressa Kitila, an employee of Total/Elf Oil Company, who was arrested on June 7 [2002], and held at Karchale central prison on suspicion of being an OLF supporter.” [3c] (p7)

OGADEN NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

- 5.54 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that:

“The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), a party based in Somali state, which split in 1995 allowing the pro-government Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL) to win the elections in 1995 and 2000. The OLF and the ONLF signed a military co-operation agreement in July 1996, but have made few inroads despite Eritrean support and training since 1998. They demand greater autonomy and firmer commitments to possible independence, claiming that the EPRDF had no intention of allowing succession, deliberately making the process lengthy and difficult...The ONLF also received support from another Somali organization, the Islamic Union Party (al-Ittihad al-Islam), which has been fighting for an Islamic state in Somalia.” [1a] (p427)

OROMO NATIONAL CONGRESS

- 5.55 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, stated that:

“The ONC, founded in 1996 by a member of the Addis Ababa University’s political science faculty, exists to oppose the Oromo People’s Democratic Organization through legitimate electoral channels (in contrast to the armed opposition of the Oromo Liberation Front and other resistance movements, which the ONC condemns). It fielded 36 candidates in the 2000 federal elections and won one seat in the federal House of People’s Representatives.” [28] (p169)

SOUTHERN ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC COALITION

5.56 Political Parties of the World, updated in January 2002, stated that:

“The SEPDC was founded in 1992 as a multi-party coalition under the leadership of Beyene Petros, president of the Hadiya National Democratic Organization. Having obtained a peak membership of 14 parties, it split in 1993, retaining as members several parties which were prepared to accept exclusion from the transitional Council of Representatives over a current political dispute. Strongly critical of the EPRDF government’s record in office (and of the authorities’ conduct of the elections), the SEPDC won three seats in the federal House of People’s Representatives in 2000.” [28] (p170)

COALITION OF ETHIOPIAN OPPOSITION POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

5.57 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that: “An attempt to provide an alternative umbrella opposition grouping came when eight opposition groups met in Paris in September 1998 and formed the Coalition of Ethiopian Opposition Political Organizations (CEOPO). It included groups based both in Ethiopia and abroad, but the choice of prominent anti-EPRDF exiles for its leadership meant it did not participate in the May 2000 elections.” [1a] (p428)

JOINT ACTION FOR DEMOCRACY IN ETHIOPIA

5.58 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report on Ethiopia stated that:

“A new coalition, Joint Action for Democracy in Ethiopia (JADE), published its manifesto in March 2003. Chaired by Dr Beyene Petros, and subsequently by Dr Merera Gudina, by June 2004 UEDF encompassed 15 opposition organizations, including the CAFPDE, the SEPDC, the All Ethiopia Unity Party (previously the All Amhara People’s Organization – AAPO) the Oromo National Congress, and the Pan-Ethiopian Democratic Unity Party (EDUP). Following a joint conference of all opposition parties in late 2003 in the USA it also encompassed a number of external groupings, including MEISON and the EPRP. In February 2004 senior members of the UEDF held discussions with Prime Minister Meles on a range of issues relating to the legislative elections scheduled for May 2005.” [1a] (p428)

ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE’S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

5.59 According to the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board on 29 October 2002:

“The Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party (EPRP) is not included among a list of 72 officially recognized political parties that is posted on the Website of the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in the United Kingdom (n.d.). Nor is the party included in a similar list on the Website of the Embassy of Ethiopia in Washington, D.C. (2001). Additional information on whether the EPRP is recognized by the Ethiopian government or banned from carrying out its activities within Ethiopia could not be found among the sources consulted. However, one source quotes a former founding member of the EPRP as saying that ‘it has been a long time since EPRP withdrew from political activities as an organization’ and that ‘the leaders of the EPRP... have been out of the country for over 30 years’ (ENA 14 July 2002). In addition, a separate source refers to the EPRP as the ‘exiled opposition Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party’ (VNA 17 Feb. 2000).” [22a]

5.60 The Report further noted that:

“According to a list of Foreign Agent Registrants on the United States Department of Justice (USDJ) Website, the EPRP is listed for the six month period ending October 31, 2000 during which time the party reportedly raised US\$26,043.66 and distributed ‘materials to newspapers and civic groups on behalf of [a] foreign principal ... and address[ed] members and supporters of [a] foreign principal concerning the political situation and the activities of the party’ (USDOJ n.d.). The same source also provides a postal address for the EPRP in Washington, DC (ibid.).” [22a]

5.61 Moreover, the Report observed that:

“According to the EPRP Website, the EPRP has issued 22 press releases since April 1999 (EPRP n.d.a); the most recent, dated 11 February 2002, is a petition to the Secretary General of the United Nations regarding the Algiers Peace Agreement (ibid.b). An August 2001 press release announces the successful conclusion of the EPRP’s third general congress which was held from 21-26 August 2001 ‘with delegates from all over the world participating actively to chart the course for the struggle in the new millennium’ (ibid. Aug. 2002).” [22a]

5.62 The Report also noted that:

“Regarding recent EPRP activities within Ethiopia, a 9 June 2002 report posted on the Shaebia Website states that the EPRP ‘has countered the war launched by two brigades of the weyane Ethiopian government forces this week in Armacheho and Degedena ... and brought heavy loss to the weyane government.’ The report further states that the ‘EPRP in an ambush it launched in Welkayit, near a place called “Al geshu” ... has killed five soldiers and wounded seven’ (Shaebia 9 June 2002). The same report states that 180 people of Amhara origin were charged with collaborating with the EPRP and are ‘languishing in the two prisons of Humera and Mai Kadra’ (ibid.). Additional information regarding EPRP activities within Ethiopia since April 1999, or information on the arrest or harassment of EPRP members by the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Forces (EPRDF) could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.” [22a]

THE JUDICIARY

OVERVIEW

- 5.63 The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, [9] (p32) however the US Department of State's Human Rights Report 2003 noted that:

"The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary; however, the judiciary remained weak and overburdened. Although the federal and regional courts continued to show signs of judicial independence, in practice severe shortages of adequately trained personnel in many regions, as well as serious financial constraints, combined to deny citizens the full protections provided by the Constitution." [3b] (p8) An IRIN news report gives an example of this in July 2001. "Residents of Oromiya Regional State have claimed that many suspects were kept in jail years without charge. The head of the Oromiya representative's office at the Ministry of Justice said there were 600 suspects currently in jail who had not been charged. The assistant chief prosecutor, Abiy Yebabe, had admitted that most of the 1,200 suspects 'to be tried and being tried' under federal law had been in detention since 1999...He attributed the delay to failure by police and prosecutors to establish effective cases against the suspects and bring them to the appropriate court. He also blamed lack of trained manpower and necessary material for the judicial system." [14i]

- 5.64 The US Department of State's Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: "According to the Constitution, accused persons have the right to a public trial by an ordinary court of law within a 'reasonable time' after having been charged. Accused persons have the right to be represented by legal counsel of their choice. However, in practice, lengthy pretrial detention was common, closed proceedings occurred, and at times, detainees were allowed little or no contact with their legal counsel." [3a] (p7)

- 5.65 The same report noted that:

"The Government continued to decentralise and restructure the judiciary along federal lines with the establishment of courts at the district (woreda), zonal, and regional levels. The federal High Court and federal Supreme Court heard and adjudicated original and appeal cases involving federal law, transregional issues, and national security. The regional judiciary increasingly was autonomous, with district, zonal, high, and supreme courts mirroring the structure of the federal judiciary. There were two three-judge benches at the High Court level to handle criminal cases." [3a] (p7)

- 5.66 The Report also noted that:

"The Constitution provides legal standing to some pre-existing religious and customary courts and gives federal and regional legislatures the authority to recognize other courts. By law, all parties to a dispute must agree before a customary or religious court may hear a case. Shari'a (Islamic) courts may hear religious and family cases involving Muslims. In addition, other traditional systems of justice, like councils of elders, continued to function. Although not sanctioned by law, these traditional courts resolved disputes for the majority of citizens who lived in rural areas and who generally had little access to formal judicial systems." [3a] (p7)

- 5.67 The US Report also stated that:

“Although the Constitution provides for a presumption of innocence, defendants did not enjoy this protection in practice. The public defender’s office provides legal counsel to indigent defendants, although its scope remained severely limited, particularly with respect to SPO trials. Access to prosecutorial evidence before a trial was routinely denied to the defense, even though there is no law forbidding this and the law explicitly stipulates that persons charged with corruption are to be shown the body of evidence against them prior to their trials.” [3a] (p7)

5.68 The Report also noted that:

“Regional offices of the federal Ministry of Justice monitored local judicial developments, and the regional courts had jurisdiction over both local and federal matters, but the federal judicial presence in the regions was limited. Anecdotal evidence suggested that some local officials believed they were not accountable to a higher authority. Pending the passage by regional legislatures of laws particular to their region, all judges are guided by the federal procedural and substantive codes.” [3a] (p7)

5.69 The Report also stated that: “To remedy the severe lack of experienced staff in the judicial system, the Government continued to identify and train lower court judges and prosecutors, although officials acknowledged that the pay scale offered did not attract the required numbers of competent professionals.” [3a] (p7)

FORMER MEMBERS OF THE DERGUE/WORKERS PARTY OF ETHIOPIA

5.70 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2003 noted that:

“The SPO [Special Prosecutors Office] was established in 1992 to create an historical record of the abuses committed during the Mengistu Government (1975-91) – also known as the Dergue regime – and to bring to justice those criminally responsible for human rights violations. The SPO had authority to arrest and interrogate anyone suspected of involvement in the 1976 ‘Red Terror’ Campaign under Mengistu and other crimes. Trials began in 1994 and continued during the year. Of the 5,198 cases, the federal High Court in Addis Ababa continued to arraign and prosecute those charged with politically motivated genocide, war crimes, and aggravated homicide under the previous regime, including the disappearance of 14,209 persons. Although the process was subject to frequent and lengthy adjournments, in November [2003], the SPO reported that 99 percent of all Dergue-related trials had been completed. Approximately 3,000 were tried in absentia, including former dictator Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, who remained in exile in Zimbabwe. Updated statistics on the number of decisions handed down and the number of persons convicted during the year were unavailable at year’s end [2003]. Court-appointed attorneys, sometimes with inadequate skills and experience, represented many of the defendants, following claims that they could not afford an adequate defense.” [3b] (p9)

5.71 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: “Government authorities continued to permit diplomats to visit prominent detainees held by the Special Prosecutors Office (SPO) for alleged involvement in war crimes and terrorist activities.” [3a] (p5)

5.72 IRIN news reported on 1 March 2004 that:

“Jailed colleagues of former leader, Mengistu Haile-Mariam, [have asked] to be allowed to apologise for the atrocities perpetrated during his rule...top officials being tried for genocide wrote to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi asking for ‘forgiveness’ for crimes committed 30 years ago...Copies of the letter were sent to US President George W. Bush, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and former South African President Nelson Mandela. There has been no public response by Meles or his government to the letter, which was sent in August 2003.” [14j]

5.73 Human Rights Watch in its 2005 World Report on Ethiopia stated that:

“Thirteen years after the overthrow of the former military Government (the Derg), several thousand of it’s former officials remain jailed without trial, charged with genocide, crimes against humanity, and major felonies. Of those who have been tried, many have been acquitted, some after more than a decade of imprisonment. The loss of evidence over the years has resulted in some acquittals, but such losses may also make presenting an effective defence more difficult. Former dictator Mengistu Mariam, on trial in absentia, remains a guest of the Maguabe government in Zimbabwe, with a little chance of being held accountable for his abuses so long as he remains there.” [8a] (p2-3)

RECENT EXPERIENCE

5.74 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2003 noted that: “The outbreak of hostilities with Eritrea in 1998 adversely impacted the military justice system. Most foreign assistance to train officers and noncommissioned officers was suspended at the same time that the rapid expansion of the military greatly increased the need for trained military lawyers and judges. This training need remained unmet by year’s end [2003].” [3b] (p9)

5.75 IRIN news reported on 31 January 2002 that: “Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has pledged to rid Ethiopia of corruption saying there would be no hiding place for ‘sleaze and dishonesty’...the federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission brought charges totalling Ethiopian birr 1.2 billion (around \$150 million US) against some of the country’s top businessmen.” [14k]

5.76 Human Rights Watch, in its 2004 Report, stated that:

“While the judiciary is nominally independent, the judicial process is often subject to political pressure and delay because of the lack of trained judges. Criminal proceedings are frequently postponed repeatedly to allow the police and prosecutors more time to obtain evidence. Bail is often denied even where the risk of flight is minimal. Defendants charged with corruption, a non-bailable offense, remain incarcerated for years without trial because of judicially-sanctioned postponements.” [8b] (p2)

LEGAL RIGHTS AND DETENTION

OVERVIEW

5.77 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

“The Constitution and the Criminal and Civil Codes prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention. The Government frequently did not observe these provisions in practice...under the Criminal Procedure Code, any person detained must be informed of the charges within 48 hours and, in most cases, be offered release on bail. Bail was not available for some offenses, such as murder, treason, and corruption. In most cases, bail was set between \$116 (1,000 birr) and \$1,160 (10,000 birr), which was beyond the reach of most citizens. Suspects of serious offenses could be detained for 14 days while police conduct an investigation, if a panel of judges ordered it, and for additional 14-day periods while the investigation continues. In practice and particularly in the outlying regions, authorities regularly detained persons without warrants, did not charge them within 48 hours, and, if persons were released on bail, never recalled them to court. The law also prohibits detention in anything less than an official detention center; however, there were no such centers at the kebele level. The Government provided public defenders for detainees who were unable to afford private legal counsel, but only when their cases came before the court. While in detention, such detainees were allowed little or no contact with their legal counsel.” [3a] (p5)

5.78 The same Report noted that:

“The law requires judicial search warrants to search private property; however, in practice, particularly outside of Addis Ababa, police often searched property without obtaining warrants. Opposition party representatives claimed that police sometimes used fraudulent warrants to enter homes and commit criminal acts, including money extortion. There were reports that members of the Federal Police robbed persons during the year, including through the use of false warrants.” [3a] (p8)

5.79 The Report further noted that: “There continued to be reports that police forcibly entered the homes of civilians. There also were reports that security forces took persons from their homes in the middle of the night without warrants.” [3a] (p8)

DEATH PENALTY

5.80 The BBC reported in an article dated 11 August 2005:

“Two senior members of Ethiopia’s former military government have been sentenced to death after an 11-year trial....Former Security Minister Tesfaye Woldeselassie and ex-police chief Legesse Belayneh were found guilty of torturing thousands of dissidents....The two men had played prominent roles in setting up torture camps during the ‘Red Terror’ under Mengistu Haile Mariam, the court said....Eight other defendants were given prison sentences from 10 years to life for their part in the abuse of political prisoners.” [4q]

5.81 Amnesty International, in its 2005 Annual Report, stated that: “Several death sentences were imposed, but no executions were reported. In October, three OLF fighters detained since 1992, including Asili Mohamed, were sentenced to death after being convicted of killing and torturing civilians in Bedeno town in 1992. They denied the charges and their appeal to the Supreme Court was pending at the end of the year [2004].” [6b] (p3)

5.82 The Hands Off Cain website reported on 20 April, 2005: "Ethiopia voted against the resolution on the death penalty at the 61st UN Commission on Human Rights." [12a]

5.83 The website also noted on 1 March 2005 that the Ethiopian News Agency had reported on 1 March 2005:

"The Federal High Court of Ethiopia sentenced to death Colonel Tiruneh Habteselassie for genocide committed during the Dergue regime in the former Kembata and Hadiya district. Habteselassie was found guilty on two charges, homicide and extrajudicial imprisonment of people. Prosecutors produced evidence against Col. Tiruneh that corroborated his involvement in the killing of 32 people whom he alleged were members of the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP)....The court said it was confirmed that he carried out the killings in two rounds. He also threw people in jail in contravention of the law. The court said that a man convicted of homicide will face five years to life prison sentence or even death penalty. Involvement in the extrajudicial imprisonment is punishable by up to five years in prison. The colonel failed to defend his charges, the court said. Habteselassie reportedly took the 32 victims, chained by their hands, to a grave yard prepared earlier by grader and ordered the firing squad to shoot them to death. This was a barbaric and genocidal act, the court said." [12b]

5.84 In December 2003, Amnesty International reported that:

"The Federal High Court in the capital, Addis Ababa, sentenced four people to death in August [2003] for the killing of the former Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and 13 others who 'disappeared' in 1978. Another man, a former revolutionary committee leader, was sentenced to death in November [2003] for the murder of 12 prisoners during the former government's 'terror campaign' against its opponents between 1977 and 1979. The sentences are part of the ongoing 'Dergue trials' of over 2000 officials of the former Mengistu Haile-Mariam government who are accused of genocide and other crimes. The five condemned prisoners have the right of appeal." [6f] (p3)

5.85 Amnesty International in its 2004 Report stated that: "Six defendants were sentenced to death in different Dergue trials during 2003. They were convicted of killings under former President Mengistu, including of the 'disappeared' Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abune Tewoflos, in 1978. No appeals had been heard by the end of 2003. The only previous death sentences in these trials had been imposed *in absentia*. Almost all defendants faced a possible death penalty." [6c] (p3)

RECENT EXPERIENCE

5.86 Human Rights Watch, in its 2005 Report, stated that: "Excessive force has often been used to quell peaceful demonstrations. Demonstrators are subject to mass arrest and mistreatment." [8a] (p1)

5.87 The ruling party-controlled Walta information centre reported on 26 February 2002 that: "The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it has recently completed basic courses to Regional police instructors and commissioners as well as Zonal and Woreda police commanders...the trainings...were dedicated to the teaching of human rights and good policing.

According to ICRC...the courses tackled key concepts, such as legal and ethical premises of law enforcement, maintenance of public order, basic law enforcement powers (arrest, detention, use of force and firearms), command and management and special attention due to vulnerable groups such as women and juveniles...860 police commissioners, and zonal and woreda commanders, 1,790 new police recruits, 150 police cadets, 350 special forces cadets and 350 prison administration trainees benefited from the series of training programmes.” [19a]

- 5.88 The BBC reported on 21 October 2004: “Three men have been sentenced to death in Ethiopia after being found guilty of mass murder of more than 200 people over a decade ago....The court said the men were all members of the rebel Oromo Liberation Front.” [4r]
- 5.89 Human Rights Watch, in its 2004 Report stated that: “A businesswoman, Dinkinesh Deressa, arrested in June 2002 and charged with being a member of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), an armed opposition group, was released on bail in July 2002. Three days later she was rearrested on the same charge and denied bail. Although the presentation of evidence in her trial ended one year later, in July 2003, she remained incarcerated without judgment at the end of 2003.”. [8b] (p2)

INTERNAL SECURITY

- 5.90 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

“The security forces consist of the military, federal and local police, and local militias. The police have primary responsibility for internal security, but local militias outside police command also operated as local security forces. The army is responsible for external security but also has some domestic security responsibilities, particularly along borders with neighbouring countries.... Military forces continued to conduct a number of low level operations against the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), the Somalia based Al Ittihad Al Islami terrorist organization, and elements of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). While civilian authorities generally maintained effective control of the security forces, there were some instances in which elements of the security forces acted independently of government authority. Members of the security forces committed serious human rights abuses.” [3a] (p1)

PRISONS AND PRISON CONDITIONS

- 5.91 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report covering 2004 documented that:

“The Government permitted independent monitoring of prisons and police stations by the ICRC. Diplomatic missions were also granted access upon providing advance notification to prison officials. In June, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights paid one of its occasional visits to prisons in various parts of the country. The ICRC generally had access to federal and regional prisons, civilian detention facilities, and police stations throughout the country during the year, and conducted hundreds of visits involving thousands of detainees. The ICRC was allowed to meet regularly with prisoners without third parties being present. The ICRC received government permission to visit military detention

facilities where suspected OLF fighters were detained. The ICRC also continued to visit civilian Eritrean nationals and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin detained on national security grounds.” [3a] (p5)

- 5.92 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2004 also documented that:

“Prison and pretrial detention center conditions were very poor and overcrowding remained a serious problem. Prisoners often were allocated fewer than 21.5 square feet of sleeping space in a room that could contain up to 200 persons. The daily meal budget was approximately 25 cents per prisoner per day, and many prisoners had family members deliver food every day or used their own funds to purchase food from local vendors. Prison conditions were unsanitary, and access to medical care was not reliable. There was no budget for prison facility maintenance. Prisoners typically were permitted daily access to prison yards, which often included working farms, mechanical shops, and rudimentary libraries. Prison letters must be written in Amharic, which made outside contact difficult for non Amharic speakers; however, this restriction generally was not enforced. In police detention centers police often physically abused detainees. Diplomatic observers reported firsthand accounts of such beatings from AAU student detainees in Oromiya. Visitors generally were permitted; however, they were sometimes denied access to detainees.” [3a] (p4)

- 5.93 Moreover, the Report stated that:

“Female prisoners were held separately from men; however, juveniles sometimes were incarcerated with adults. There was only 1 juvenile remand home with a capacity of 150 for children under age 15, and the juveniles who could not be accommodated at the juvenile remand home were incarcerated with adults. Pretrial detainees were usually detained separately from convicted prisoners at local police stations or in the limited Central Investigation Division (CID) detention facility in Addis Ababa until they were charged. The law requires that prisoners be transferred to federal prisons upon conviction; however, this requirement sometimes was not enforced in practice.” [3a] (p5)

- 5.94 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2004 documented that: “There were some deaths in prison during the year due to illness and disease; however, no statistics on the number of deaths in prison were available at year’s end [2004].” [3a] (p4)

- 5.95 The Report further added that: “There were many reports from opposition party members that in small towns, persons were detained in police stations for long periods without access to a judge and that sometimes these persons’ whereabouts were unknown for several months.” [3a] (p5)

- 5.96 Human Rights Watch, in its 2003 Report, stated that:

“Prison conditions were harsh in the provinces and in Addis Ababa. Medical care was rudimentary and rationed to a handful of prisoners per day. Prisoners with AIDS reportedly received no treatment, and former prisoners reported having witnessed deaths of prisoners with serious diseases such as tuberculosis. Prisoners were denied access to bathing facilities, mattresses, and blankets. Some released in 2002 told of being detained in such crowded confinement that they had had to take turns sleeping. Food was meagre but

adequate. Prisoners who had family living nearby were normally allowed to receive food from family members. In May 2002 the International Committee of the Red Cross reported it had access to 4,800 security detainees in 150 places of detention.” [8c] (p2-3)

- 5.97 Amnesty International, in its 2003 Report, stated that: “Torture of political prisoners, particularly those accused of links with armed opposition groups, continued to be frequently reported. Several women accused of involvement with such groups were reportedly raped.” [6d] (p3)
- 5.98 Following deep concern over the treatment of prisoners in Ethiopia, prison officials underwent training from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to improve the conditions for inmates in October 2003 as reported by IRIN. [14I]

THE MILITARY

MILITARY SERVICE

- 5.99 War Resisters International (1998) stated that:

“There is no compulsory military service in Ethiopia...enlistment is on a voluntary basis.” [18] The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that: “The size of the army increased sharply between 1998 and 2000 after hostilities broke out between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May 1998...However, following the signing of the peace accord between the two countries in December 2000, the Ethiopian Government commenced a major demobilization programme, and by early 2003 there remained only about 156,000 in the Ethiopian armed forces. Plans to replace militia with an unarmed but trained reservist force of up to 200,000 advanced during 2004 under a series of security reform measures addressing police, prison and military issues.” [1a] (p429)

- 5.100 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: “The military remained an ethnically diverse organization; however, diversity was less common in the higher ranks among officer personnel, which was dominated by members of the Tigrayan ethnic group.” [3a] (p19)

- 5.101 CNN reported on 3 July 2005:

“About 150 Ethiopian soldiers blocked motorists from entering a northern Ethiopian town to protest delays in getting their pay, a witness said Sunday, while a government spokesman only acknowledged there was a pay dispute without giving details....The soldiers set up a roadblock outside Fetcbe, around 120 kilometers (75 miles) north of the capital, Addis Ababa, stopping motorists from entering the town and temporarily seizing their vehicles, said a witness, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation....The soldiers did not harm anyone and later returned people’s vehicles, saying they just wanted them to know soldiers who served in a U.N. peacekeeping mission in Liberia had not been paid, the witness said.” [5]

CHILD SOLDIERS

- 5.102 Child Soldiers in its 2004 Report on Ethiopia stated that:

“National recruitment guidelines in use since 1991 specify that recruits must be between the ages of 18 and 25, and have completed six years of secondary education (two years for recruits from marginalised regions). However, in 2001 the lack of a birth registration system was noted with concern by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Recruitment officers were believed to have operated with considerable discretion, putting minors at risk of recruitment, particularly in rural and impoverished communities.” [25]

5.103 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2002 noted that:

“Scarce birth certificates, poor educational opportunities, patriotism, and pervasive poverty encouraged underage applicants to try to circumvent restrictions on underage soldiers. If a unit commander suspected but could not prove that a soldier was underage, he could transfer the soldier from a front-line combat unit to a rear-area command. There were no reports of children joining local militias during the year [2002].” [3c] (p25)

5.104 IRIN news on 27 March 2002 reported that:

“A special representative for the United Nations has said that, during a recent visit to Eritrea and Ethiopia, he saw no systematic use of child soldiers and found no evidence of child abuse in refugee camps...[this was] particularly impressive, ‘since no other conflict zone he had visited recently had been free of the problem’...He attributed [this]...to the control exercised by local authorities and communities. According to Otunnu, local people both organised and monitored life in the camps and distributed provisions, while the international community and national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) provided support for their activities.” [14m]

MEDICAL SERVICES

GENERAL SITUATION

5.105 Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in a report dated 27 June 2005 noted that:

“A severe outbreak of kala azar, a rare and fatal disease, has struck the region of Amhara, northwest Ethiopia. In the small rural community of Bura (pop: 6,000) more than 150 people have died and over 230 infected persons have already been recorded”.... At first, local health authorities thought it was a malaria outbreak and treated the patients accordingly. But when the treatment showed no results, the MSF team insisted that further tests should be performed. Although this region was not known as a kala azar endemic area, they thought it could be the cause of so many deaths. The doctor’s suspicion was finally confirmed with laboratory tests.” [21a]

5.106 The World Health Organization (WHO) reported on 15 June 2005:

“Dr Olusegun Babaniyi, WHO Representative for Ethiopia, handed over three cold rooms to His Excellency Dr. Tedros Adhanom, State Minister of Health of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia at a handover ceremony conducted at the Central Vaccine Store on June 13, 2005 in the presence of experts and officials of the Federal Ministry of Health and WHO....Of the three

walk-in Cold Rooms of 30 M3 volume each, two cold rooms were installed at the central vaccine store in Addis Ababa, and one in Mekele for the Tigray Regional State.” [15a]

5.107 The report goes on to say:

“This donation of walk-in Cold Rooms by the WHO to the Ministry of Health will enhance improved vaccine management and storage capacity at Federal and regional levels and assure vaccine potency of millions of vials of vaccines worth five million USD procured for providing routine immunization for 2.6 million children under one against the six vaccine preventable diseases, 6.4 million women of child bearing age against tetanus annually, massive vaccination against polio in rounds of National Polio Eradication Campaign as a response to the wild polio virus importation and containment. The installation of the two cold rooms at the central level will increase vaccine storage capacity at the center by 80%, while the one in Mekele will drastically improve vaccine storage capacity of the region, which hitherto had no cold room facilities.” [15a]

5.108 IRIN news stated on 22 November 2004:

“Ethiopia has launched an emergency polio vaccination campaign amid new fears the disease could spread from neighbouring Sudan, the health ministry said.... The government began targeting children last Thursday in six regions neighbouring Sudan after 19 cases emerged just 75 km from their common border. Ethiopia has been polio free for the last four years and hopes to be certified free of the virus in accordance with World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines.” [14n]

5.109 The article goes on to say:

“Less than half of children in Ethiopia are immunised against preventable diseases. Immunisation rates for polio are slightly higher at 60 percent. Poliomyelitis – the full scientific name for polio – is a highly infectious disease with no cure and is caused by a virus that mainly affects children under three years of age. It invades the nervous system and can cause total paralysis in a matter of hours. The virus enters the body through the mouth and multiplies in the intestine....Initial symptoms are fever, fatigue, headache, vomiting and stiffness in the neck and pain in the limbs. One in 200 infections leads to irreversible paralysis, which is usually in the legs.” [14n]

5.110 IRIN news stated on 30 July 2004:

“United Nations agencies and the Ethiopian government are trying to raise nearly US \$7 million to buy more effective malaria drugs after it was found that the disease had become resistant to medicines currently being used to treat it....’The country has commenced a drug policy change after it was found that malaria resistance to Fansidar was relatively high’, Christopher White, malaria project officer with the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) told IRIN by telephone from the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa....’The government had to change very quickly to the use of Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy (ACT), which costs ten times more, and this is the reason for the appeal’, White added.” [14o]

5.111 IRIN news stated on 11 May 2004:

“Over 100 Ethiopian health workers have undergone training in the treatment and management of severely malnourished children, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) reported...The health workers will in turn be deployed to various hospitals to train others, UNICEF added....The trained health workers included 41 nurses, 12 doctors and 54 medical officers. They were trained at the Addis Ababa, Gondar and Jimma universities, UNICEF said in a statement. ‘We hope to expand the training to other universities so that eventually [this type of] treatment will be part of all medical school curricula’, Sylvie Chamois, Nutrition Officer at UNICEF was quoted as saying.” [14p]

5.112 Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported on 6 December 2004:

“The past year has brought about important developments in treating people with malaria and AIDS in Ethiopia. One positive change has been the country’s move toward a new, more effective protocol for treating malaria, which is endemic in the country. This policy shift came about after many months of advocacy work done by MSF and numerous national and International organizations in the midst of a severe malaria epidemic that started near the end of 2003....In most of Africa, conventional malaria treatments such as chloroquine and sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP) are no longer effective in many patients due to the increased resistance of parasites to these drugs. To counter this problem, MSF has been promoting the use of artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) which is derived from a centuries-old Chinese herbal medicine.” [21b]

5.113 The article added:

“The malaria epidemic of late 2003 affected the southern Ethiopian state of Oromiya and other parts of the country. When the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that an estimated 15 million Ethiopians were at risk of contracting the disease, MSF asked the government for permission to use ACT....MSF believed that this combination therapy was vital to stopping the further spread of the epidemic. However, the government refused. It said it wanted more scientific evidence before determining whether the national treatment protocol should be changed. As a consequence, health staff from some organizations were forced to treat thousands of sick patients in the epidemic area with largely ineffective medicines, and MSF was obliged to adapt to the situation by using quinine as first-line treatment....The death toll from this outbreak was substantially higher than it was from malaria in 2001 and 2002. According to government figures, approximately 3,500 people died of malaria during the outbreak.” [21b]

5.114 IRIN news stated in August 2003 that:

“Ethiopia is to build its first ever state of the art cardiac centre to tackle ‘rampant’ heart disease in the country. Dr Belay Abegazm the country’s only paediatric heart surgeon, told IRIN on Monday that the first operations could begin as early as next year. Heart disease is a major killer in Ethiopia and is compounded by massive overcrowding in urban centres. Dr Belay estimated that as many as 200,000 new cases of heart disease occur each year in the country...There are currently less than 10 surgeons who can perform heart operations in the country – and Dr Belay is the only doctor able to operate on children. He said the centre, which is being supported by Addis Ababa

University, would also act as a training institute and at least one or two operations could be carried out a day.” [14q]

- 5.115 ORBIS, an organisation dedicated to saving sight worldwide, stated in an article on its website, accessed on 26 July 2005:

“Trachoma is the leading cause of preventable blindness in Ethiopia and is responsible for 12.5% of the world’s blindness. The disease, typically transmitted by flies, is one of poverty and the inability to perform basic hygienic practices because of poor sanitation conditions and an unclear water supply....To eradicate this infectious eye disease, ORBIS has implemented the SAFE program in the rural areas of Ethiopia. SAFE stands for Surgery, Antibiotics, Face Washing, and Environmental Sanitation. ORBIS’s SAFE program includes mass treatment with antibiotics, public education, and construction of wells and latrines. In addition, rural nurses are being trained to perform trichiasis surgery. (Trichiasis surgery is where the eyelids or lashes, which have turned inward as a result of repeated trachoma infection scarring, are reconstructed so that the eyelashes will no longer scratch and scar the clear part of the eye (cornea). If left uncorrected, trachoma will cause corneal blindness.)...In conjunction with Pfizer, ORBIS is helping to distribute free doses of the antibiotic Zithromax. One dose of the drug will get rid of trachoma if a person has it and will assure the person’s eye doesn’t get infected during the doses’ lifecycle.” [34a]

- 5.116 ORBIS, stated in an overview of Ethiopia (accessed in August 2005) that:

“An estimated 1.25% to 1.5% or close to a million of Ethiopia’s 67 million people are blind, and three times that number have impaired vision, which is among the highest in the world. The leading causes of blindness and visual impairment are cataract, trachoma, glaucoma, uncorrected refractive errors and childhood blinding diseases mainly from corneal scarring.” [34b]

- 5.117 It further added:

“About 70% of the qualified 67 ophthalmologists work in the capital Addis Ababa, mostly in the private sector. The ophthalmologist-to-rural population ratio (where 85% of the population lives) is 1:4 to 1:6 million. Other eye care professionals include 4 cataract surgeons, 73 ophthalmic nurses and ophthalmic medical assistants. There are two ophthalmic training schools for nurses and only one institution for post-graduate education in ophthalmology.” [34b]

- 5.118 UNICEF – The United Nations Children’s Fund states in its background information on its ‘UNICEF Nutrition Programme in Ethiopia’ (accessed on 27 July 2005) that:

“The objectives of the UNICEF Nutrition Programme are to reduce Vitamin A deficiency among children under five years of age, increase the availability and use of iodized salt, reduce stunting and wasting, improve nutrition among people living with HIV/AIDS, and reduce morbidity during nutrition emergencies.... Malnutrition is the underlying cause of death in more the 50 per cent of deaths of children under five years of age. In Ethiopia more than five out of ten children under the age of five are chronically malnourished and have stunted growth....In 2002/ 2003, the failure of rains in various areas of the

country has resulted in increased numbers of persons suffering from hunger.” [30a]

5.119 UNICEF states in states in a press release dated 11 May 2004:

“UNICEF has funded the training of trainers (TOT) for more than 100 health professionals at three Ethiopian medical schools so that they can train their peers in the treatment and management of severely malnourished children.... Since the beginning of this year, 41 nurses, 12 doctors and 54 medical interns have been provided training based on the national protocol at Addis Ababa, Gondar and Jimma Universities. Therapeutic feeding units (TFUs), which have been set up at the hospitals with UNICEF support including therapeutic feeding products and basic equipment, were used to give the participants practical hands on experience dealing with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) cases.” [30b]

5.120 The report went on to state:

“The Oromyia Health Bureau plans to open TFUs in Nekempte, Metu and Dembidolo Hospitals and has sent 60 of its health workers to be trained on the management of SAM at Jimma University. Training will also be conducted at Gondar University for members of the Amhara Health Bureau, which has opened a TFU at the Dabat Health Centre with plans to open two more in South Gondar. A TFU at Yekatit 12 Hospital is in the process of being opened by the Addis Ababa Health Bureau.” [30b]

5.121 Furthermore, IRIN news stated on 16 July 2003 that:

“One of Africa’s first ever eye banks has opened in Ethiopia – potentially bringing relief to thousands of blind people in the country. Medical director Dr Yonas Tilahun told IRIN on Wednesday that the bank will enable simple and affordable operations to help tackle preventable blindness in the country...Patients at the hospital have to pay for the treatment – around US \$18 – although the hospital is looking at cutting the cost completely.” [14r]

HIV/AIDS

5.122 Médecins Sans Frontières reported on 27 January 2004:

“This week the international medical relief organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the Tigray Regional Health Bureau have launched the first program of free treatment with antiretroviral drugs (ARV) for HIV/AIDS patients in Ethiopia. There are 13 Patients in Humera’s ‘Kahsay Abera’ hospital who have started to receive their medicines....The new ARV program is part of the commitment by the Ethiopian government and MSF to increase the availability of ARV treatment to patients in need of it.” [21c]

5.123 The article further noted:

“While initiatives to introduce ARVs have commenced in other parts of Ethiopia, Humera is a remote area with a relatively mobile and vulnerable population that is unable to access and pay for the treatment available in major cities in other parts of the country. Humera has a number of high-risk groups due to the presence of large numbers of single men including migrant workers, attracting many commercial sex workers to the area....In addition, preparations are under

way to open the road to North-Sudan creating a potential HIV/AIDS corridor to the east of the Tigray region. On top of that, Humera is located in a lowland area with tropical diseases like kala azar, which can lead to complex co-infections with HIV/AIDS.” [21c]

5.124 It further added:

“ARV drugs have proven successful in slowing down the effects of AIDS, sometimes to the extent of virtually taking away the effects of the disease. The patient can regain a more normal life; continue to work and function in society and the family. The launch of the ARV program was marked by a dinner Saturday night in Humera, the extreme north-west corner of Ethiopia, during which Kindu, the first patient who started ARV treatment on 9 January 2004, spoke about how critically ill he had been only 17 days ago, bedridden in the Humera hospital and how he had regained his appetite after starting ARV....In addition to the new ARV-treatment program, MSF supports Humera hospital with voluntary counseling and testing services, management of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), treatment of opportunistic infections for AIDS patients, a food support program for AIDS patients that visit the hospital, a program of preventive HIV/AIDS sensitization and outreach, and a program to treat kala azar. MSF hopes to open additional ARV-treatment programs in Ethiopia as soon as possible.” [21c]

5.125 A USAID brief dated July 2002 stated that:

“According to the Ministry of Health (MOH), approximately 3.2 million Ethiopians are living with HIV/AIDS, though the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) estimated a total of 2.1 million at the end of 2001, with an adult prevalence of 6.4 percent...According to the MOH, sexual contact and perinatal transmission are the predominant modes of HIV transmission. Currently, 87 percent of all HIV/AIDS infections result from heterosexual transmission.” [26]

5.126 The report went on to note that:

“As of October 1997, men comprised about 61 percent of reported AIDS cases. HIV prevalence among pregnant women in Addis Ababa increased from 5 percent in 1989 to 18 percent in 1997...As of 2001, about 200,000 children under age 15 were living with HIV/AIDS. Reversing years of progress in child survival, AIDS increased Ethiopia’s infant mortality rate by 7 percent from 1995 to 2000. According to the MOH, as of December 2001, an estimated 1 million Ethiopian children had been orphaned due to HIV/AIDS.” [26]

5.127 The report added that: “Ethiopia adopted a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy in 1998 to emphasise prevention, care, and support, and target vulnerable groups. The plan has been updated for the 2000 – 2004 period through the Strategic Framework for the National Response to HIV/AIDS. The overall goals of the policy and framework are to reduce HIV transmission; reduce associated morbidity and mortality; and reduce burdens on individuals, families, and society at large.” [26]

5.128 The World Health Organization (WHO) reported on 15 July 2005:

“Today Dr Olusegun A. Babaniyi, representative of the World Health Organization to Ethiopia laid the foundation stone for the building of a youth health and recreation center at the town of Bishoftu about 40 km south east of Addis Ababa in the Oromiya Region of Ethiopia....The Center is being built with an initial outlay of birr 140,000 from the WHO/OPEC Fund Initiative. When it is completed the centre will provide HIV/AIDS education, counselling and testing (VCT) services to the youth in Bishoftu town. Reproductive health services such as control and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) condom distribution and others will also be included. The center will also organize various youth clubs such as anti-AIDS club, drama and music troupe, indoor and out door recreational activities, etc.” [15b]

5.129 The report then went on to say:

“The WHO/OPEC fund initiative aims to scale up selected HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections interventions in selected districts in Ethiopia as part of a contribution to the national goal of preventing the spread and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS....The four intervention areas supported by the WHO/OPEC project include strengthening voluntary counselling and testing, STI prevention and control, opportunistic infection management, establishment of a youth friendly health services and building institutional capacity to better monitor and evaluate the health sector response against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.” [15b]

5.130 IRIN news reported on 4 August 2003 that: “Although the cost of the [ARV] drugs has dropped dramatically in recent years – in Ethiopia the monthly cost is around US \$40 per person – they are still out of the reach of most. The Government is looking at two ways of ensuring greater supply and reducing the cost – by financial support from the Global Fund and through generic drugs.” [14s]

5.131 IRIN news further reported on 29 January 2004 that:

“The international medical relief organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the Tigray Regional Health Bureau this week launched the first programme of free anti-retrovirals (ARVs) for the treatment of HIV/AIDS patients in Ethiopia...The first 13 patients at the Kahsay Abera hospital in the northwestern town of Humera had started receiving their ARVs, it said. The statement noted that the new ARV programme was a component of the commitment by the government and MSF to increase the availability of ARVs for patients in need of them...To be selected, patients had to be able to understand and have the ability to follow the medical instructions. The patients have also undergone an extensive pre-treatment counselling period.” [14t]

THE DISABLED

5.132 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

“The law mandates equal rights for persons with disabilities; however, the Government had no established mechanisms to enforce these rights. Persons with minor disabilities sometimes complained of job discrimination. The Government did not mandate access to buildings or require government services for persons with disabilities. Although the Constitution provides for rehabilitation

and assistance to persons with physical and mental disabilities, the Government devoted few resources to these purposes.” [3a] (p19)

5.133 The same Report 2004 noted that:

“There were approximately 6 million persons with disabilities in the country, according to local NGOs. The conflict with Eritrea resulted in numerous soldiers losing limbs, many from landmine explosions. Wheelchairs were not widely available throughout the country. Although there were approximately 800,000 persons with mental disabilities, there was only 1 mental hospital and only approximately 10 psychiatrists in the country. There were approximately 70 NGOs that worked with persons with disabilities.” [3a] (p19)

5.134 The US Department of State’s Human Rights Report 2003 noted that:

“The Amhara Development Association provided vocational training to war veterans with disabilities in Bahir Dar. The Tigray Development Association operated a center in Mekelle that provided prostheses and seed money for business development, training, and counseling for persons with disabilities. The international NGO Landmine Survivors provided a number of services to victims of landmine explosions, including counseling and referrals to rehabilitation services”. [3b] (p23)

EDUCATION

5.135 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that:

“Education in Ethiopia is available free of charge, and, after a rapid growth in number of schools, it became compulsory between the ages of seven and 13 years. Since 1976 most primary and secondary schools have been controlled by local peasant associations and urban dwellers’ associations. Primary education begins at seven years of age and lasts for eight years. Secondary education, beginning at 15 years of age lasts for a further four years, comprising two cycles of two years, the second of which provides preparatory education for entry to the tertiary level. In 2000/01 total enrolment at primary schools included 47% of children in the appropriate age-group (53% of boys; 41% of girls); according to UNESCO estimates, enrolment at secondary schools included 13% (15% of boys; 10% of girls) of children in the relevant age group.” [1a] (p450)

5.136 The Report also noted that: “There are 21 institutions of higher education in Ethiopia, with a total of 67,682 enrolled students in 1999/2000. There is a considerable shortage of qualified teachers, which is particularly acute in secondary schools, which rely heavily on expatriate staff. The 1999/2000 budget allocated an estimated 11.3% (2,304m. birr) of total expenditure to education.” [1a] (p450)

5.137 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

“Education is compulsory through grade six. By law, primary education is tuition free; however, despite the increase in the number of schools during the year, there were still not enough schools to accommodate the country’s youth, particularly in rural areas. In addition, the cost of uniforms and schools supplies was prohibitive for many families. The Government used a three shift system in

most primary and secondary schools in urban areas to maximize the utilization of classrooms and to provide an opportunity for working children to attend school. In 2003, approximately 43 percent of primary and 70 percent of secondary schools operated in two shifts to maximize the utilization of classrooms. Only 74.4 percent of male primary school age children and 59.1 percent of female primary school age children attended school. Girls attended school in fewer numbers than boys, except in Addis Ababa, where girls' attendance was slightly higher at 52.9 percent. Government reports showed that 28.7 percent of the children who attended school left the system before they reached the second grade. Only 22.1 percent of children who began first grade completed eighth grade. The literacy rate, according to the 2001 Child Labor Survey, was 20.6 percent of women, compared with 42.7 percent of men." [3a] (p17)

6. Human rights

6.A HUMAN RIGHTS: ISSUES

GENERAL

- 6.01 The 1994 Constitution gives prominence to, and guarantees respect for, human rights. [9] (p2) However the US State Department's Report on Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

"The Government's human rights record remained poor; although there were improvements, serious problems remained. Security forces committed a number of unlawful killings, including alleged political killings, and beat, tortured, and mistreated detainees. Prison conditions remained poor. The Government continued to arrest and detain persons arbitrarily, particularly those suspected of sympathizing with or being members of the OLF. Thousands of suspects remained in detention without charge, and lengthy pretrial detention continued to be a problem. The Government sometimes infringed on citizens' privacy rights, and the law regarding search warrants was often ignored." [3a] (p1)

- 6.02 The Constitution provides for freedom of the press and the independence of the judiciary. [9] (p10 & 32) In practice the US Department of State's 2004 Report noted that: "The Government restricted freedom of the press; however, compared with previous years, there were fewer reports that journalists were arrested, detained or punished for writing articles critical of the Government. Journalists continued to practice self censorship." [3a] (p1)

- 6.03 The Human Rights Watch Report dated 2005 stated: "The Ethiopian government continues to deny many of its citizens' basic human rights. Police and security forces have harassed, illegally detained, tortured, and in some cases, killed members of the political opposition, demonstrators and suspected insurgents. The government has also continued its efforts to muzzle the private press through the use of criminal sanctions and other forms of intimidation." [8a] (p1)

- 6.04 Amnesty International, in its 2005 Report, noted that: "Widespread arbitrary detentions, torture and excessive use of force by police and soldiers were reported.... Several thousand people remained in long-term detention without charge or trial; most were accused of supporting armed opposition groups. Prison conditions were harsh and some prisoners 'disappeared'." [6b] (p1)

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE MEDIA

OVERVIEW OF THE ETHIOPIAN MEDIA

- 6.05 The Constitution and the 1992 Press Law provides for freedom of speech and of the press. [9] (p10) However, the US State Department of State's Report on Human Rights for 2004 noted that: "The Government restricted these rights in practice. The Government continued to prosecute journalists and editors for publishing allegedly fabricated information and for other violations of the press law. The Government controlled all broadcast media. Private and government journalists routinely practiced self censorship. Nonetheless, the private press

remained active and often published articles that were extremely critical of the Government.” [3a] (p9)

- 6.06 The Report goes on to state that: “Foreign journalists continued to operate freely and often wrote articles critical of government policies. They or their local affiliates were often granted greater access to government officials than were local independent journalists. Several foreign news organizations staffed offices in Addis Ababa with local journalists who operated free of government restriction.” [3a] (p9)

NEWSPAPERS AND JOURNALS

- 6.07 The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) observed in its 2004 Report that:

“Ethiopia’s private print media are mostly concentrated in the capital, Addis Ababa, where a number of local- and English-language publications present a variety of viewpoints. Under Press Proclamation No. 34 of 1992, criminal charges can be brought against journalists for such offenses as defamation, incitement to violence, and the publication of false news. Court cases can drag on for years, and journalists are regularly jailed for not being able to pay bail or for missing court hearings. Many journalists have multiple charges pending against them.” [20a]

- 6.08 The BBC in its Country Profiles, updated in July 2005, states that: “The number of privately-owned newspapers has grown; some are available. The Walta website also hosts a few pro-government English-language newspapers.” [4s]

- 6.09 According to the BBC Country Profile (2005), the Ethiopian Press consists of the following:

Addis Zemen – state-owned daily
Ethiopian Herald – State-owned English-language daily
Menelik – private, weekly
Addis Admas – Private, weekly
Seifenebelbal – private, weekly
Toby – private, weekly
Wonchif – private, weekly
Tomar – private, weekly
The Reporter – private, English-language web pages
The Sun – private, English-language weekly
Addis Tribune – privately-owned English-language weekly
Capital – English-language, business weekly [4s]

- 6.10 The US Department of State’s Report on Human Rights for 2004 noted that:

“There were reports that police harassed, beat, and detained journalists during the year. For example, on March 29, armed police beat Atnafu Alemayehu, deputy editor-in-chief of Tobia newspaper and magazine, at Kara Kore in Oromiya State after Atnafu made enquiries into resident’s complaints about the demolition of their houses. Atnafu was detained for 1 day and was released after posting bail of \$115 (1,000 Birr) at Alemgena police station. Atnafu appealed to the police station about the beating and confiscation of the tape recorder. Wondwosen Gebrekiidan, former Editor in Chief of Itop newspaper was arrested on December 23 and released on December 31. Shiferaw

Ansermu was arrested and released three times during the year, and at year's end (2004), was detained at Addis Ababa Prison." [3a] (p9)

6.11 The Report went on to say:

"The Ministry of Information required that newspapers show a bank balance of \$1,150 (10,000 Birr) at the time of their annual registration for a license to publish. This sum effectively precluded some smaller publications from registering. Permanent residency also was required for publishers to establish a newspaper. The Government did not require residency for other business owners, and some independent journalists maintained that the residency requirement was used as a form of intimidation. The press law requires all publishers to provide free copies of their publications to the Ministry of Information on the day of publication." [3a] (p10)

6.12 The Report also stated that: "The majority of private newspapers as well as government newspapers were printed at government owned presses; however, there were no reports that the independent media was unable to print articles. Police had the authority to shut down any printing press without a court order, but did not exercise that power during the year." [3a] (p10)

6.13 According to an IRIN news article on 4 July 2005:

"Five editors of independent Ethiopian newspapers were arrested and later released on bail for their coverage of post-election violence, a local media watchdog said on Friday....The Ethiopian army, in a separate statement published in the state-run media on Friday, warned newspapers against printing 'defamatory and baseless' articles. The newspapers, it added, had breached the country's press laws....'The national defence forces have the responsibility of keeping the country's territorial integrity and intervening to stabilise in the event of violent events beyond the capacity of the police force', a spokesman, Maj Gen Alemu Ayele, said in the statement....The arrest of the editors, reported by the Ethiopian Free Journalists Association (EFJA), came two days after four other newspaper editors were held for reporting that Ethiopian air force pilots had sought political asylum while training in Belarus....The government spokesman, Zemedkun Teckle, confirmed that the five editors had been held by the police." [14u]

6.14 An IRIN news article on 7 March 2005 reported:

"A 17-month ban imposed on Ethiopia's only independent journalists association has been lifted by the federal high court, the president of the association told IRIN on Friday....'This is a new chapter for Ethiopian journalists and this brings us to the forefront of the fight for freedom of expression in this country', Kifle Mulat, head of the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association (EFPJA), said. 'This is an important event in the country'....Set up in 1993, the EFPJA was only granted its government licence three years ago. It aims to defend the rights of the independent press in Ethiopia. In November 2003, it was ordered by the Ministry of Justice to suspend activities amid allegations that it was breaching Ethiopian law." [14v]

TELEVISION AND RADIO

6.15 The US Department of State's Report 2004 noted that:

“The Government continued to control all radio and television broadcast media. Although the law allows for private radio stations, a regulatory mechanism was not in place, and there were no independent radio stations. Broadcasting time on state-run Radio Ethiopia was sold to private groups and to individuals who wanted to buy spots for programs and commercials. The Government operated the sole television station and tightly controlled news broadcasts. In September, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Agency invited interested parties to apply for licenses for two new private FM stations, although no applications were filed by year’s end (2004). The Broadcasting Law prohibits political and religious organizations from owning broadcast stations. Foreign ownership is also prohibited.” [3a] (p9)

- 6.16 The Report further noted that: “There were no restrictions on access to international news broadcasts. Ownership of private satellite receiving dishes and the importation of facsimile machines and modems were permitted; however, access to this technology was restricted by its high cost and the limited capacity of the sole telecommunications entity, the Ethiopian Telecommunications Company.” [3a] (p9)

- 6.17 According to the BBC Country Profile (updated on 9 July 2005) the known radio stations in Ethiopia are:

Radio Ethiopia – state-owned, operates National Service and External Service

Voice of Tigray Revolution – Tigray Regional State government radio

Radio Fana – founded in 1994 by ruling party [4s]

Television:

Ethiopian Television (ETV) – state-owned [4s]

News agencies:

Walta Information Centre (WIC) – privately-owned, pro-government

Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) – state-owned [4s]

RECENT EXPERIENCE

- 6.18 The BBC, in its Country Profile on Ethiopia (updated on 9 July 2005), noted that: “Although the state controls radio and television, the print and broadcast media have seen dramatic changes since Mengistu’s demise....Deregulation has been on the cards for some years. Would-be private radio broadcasters were given licence application forms in 2004....Some opposition groups beam radio broadcasts to Ethiopia using hired shortwave transmitters overseas.” [4s]

- 6.19 The US Department of State’s Report on Human Rights for 2004 noted that: “The Ethiopian Women’s Media Association, which included both government and private journalists, remained active during the year. The association organized training and workshops and published a journal....The Government did not restrict Internet access.” [3a] (p10)

- 6.20 The Human Rights Watch Report dated 2005 stated:

“Serious concerns remain over the government’s efforts to introduce a controversial new press law. The government has agreed to reconsider some of the more worrying provisions of the law, such as criminal sanctions for offenses by journalists and the creation of a state-run press council, but it remains to be seen whether any substantive changes will be made. Ethiopia’s only independent journalists’ organization, the Ethiopia Free Press Journalists Association (EFJA), was shut down shortly after publicly opposing the draft law in late 2003, ostensibly for failure to submit required annual audits. The EFJA’s leadership was then purged and replaced at a meeting organized by government officials. Many of the EFJA’s members continue to contest the legitimacy of the government’s actions.” [8a] (p2)

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

OVERVIEW

- 6.21 The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, including the right of conversion. [9] (p9) The US Department of State’s International Religious Freedom Report 2004 noted that:

“The Government generally respected this right in practice; however, on occasion local authorities infringed on this right...There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom during the period covered by this report. Some Protestant and Muslim groups continued to complain that local officials discriminate against them when seeking land for churches and cemeteries, but there were reports during the period covered by this report of good relations between the Ministry of Education and the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council (EIASC) regarding the use of headscarves....The generally amicable relationship among religions in society contributed to religious freedom. In general, there was a decrease in interreligious conflict and clashes; however, intrareligious tension and government criticism increased among Muslims, which divided traditionalists from the stricter fundamentalists”. [3f] (p1)

- 6.22 The Report further noted that: “The Constitution requires the separation of religion and the state and prohibits a state religion, and the Government respects these rights in practice.” [3f] (p2)

- 6.23 Moreover the Report observed that:

“The country has a total area of 435,186 square miles, and its population is approximately 71 million. Approximately 40 to 45 percent of the population adheres to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC); however, the EOC claims 50 percent of the country’s total population, or more than 31 million adherents, and 110,450 churches. The EOC is predominant in the northern regions of Tigray and Amhara. Approximately 45 percent of the population is Muslim, although many Muslims claim that the actual percentage is higher. Addis Ababa has 1 million Muslims, according to the Supreme Islamic Council. Islam is most prevalent in the Somali and Afar regions, as well as in all the major parts of Oromia. Evangelical and Pentecostal Protestantism continue to be the fastest growing faiths and constitute more than 10 percent of the population. According to the Evangelical Church Fellowship, there are 11.5 million Protestants, although this figure may be a high estimate. Established Protestant churches such as Mekane Yesus (with 4.03 million members – an increase of 195,000 in

2003) and the Kale Hiwot followers (with 4.6 million members) are strongest in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional State (SNNPRS), western and central Oromia, and in urban areas around the country. In Gambella in the western part of the country, where ethnic clashes broke out in December 2003, the Mekane Yesus followers represent 60 percent of the population, according to the president of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus. The Evangelical Church Fellowship claims there are now 22 denominations under their religious umbrella and that the number of adherents increased by 4 million in the period covered by this report." [3f] (p1)

6.24 The US Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report 2004 also noted that: "The Government requires that religious groups be registered. Religious institutions, like nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), are registered with the Ministry of Justice and must renew their registration every 3 years. The new registration policy obliging churches to re-register every 3 years went into effect in December 2002." [3f] (p2)

6.25 The same Report stated that: "The Government officially recognises both Christian and Muslim holidays, and has mandated a 2-hour lunch break on Fridays to allow Muslims to go to a mosque to pray. The Government has also agreed to a request from Muslim students at Addis Ababa Commercial College to delay the start of afternoon classes until 1:30 p.m. to permit them to perform afternoon prayers at a nearby mosque." [3f] (p3)

6.26 The Report goes on to note that:

"In most sections of the country Orthodox Christians and Muslims participate in each other's religious observances, and there is tolerance for intermarriage and conversion in certain areas, most notably in Welo, in the Amhara region, as well as in urban areas throughout the country....In the capital, Addis Ababa, persons of different faiths often live side-by-side. Most urban areas reflect a mixture of all religious denominations. The Roman Catholic Church and evangelical Protestant denominations, particularly the Mekane Yesus Church and Kale Hiwot Churches, provided social services such as health care and education to non-members as well as to members." [3f] (p6)

6.27 According to the US 2004 Report on Religious Freedom:

"The Government has interpreted the constitutional provision for separation of religion and state to mean that religious instruction is not permitted in schools, whether they are public or private. Schools owned and operated by Catholic, Orthodox, evangelical, and Muslim groups are not allowed to teach religion as a course of study. Most private schools teach morals courses as part of school curricula, and the Government Education Bureau in Addis Ababa has complained that such courses are not free of religious influence. Churches are permitted to have Sunday schools, the Koran is taught at mosques, and public schools permit the formation of clubs, including those of a religious nature." [3f] (p3)

6.28 Furthermore the Report noted that:

"The generally amicable relationship among religions in society contributed to religious freedom; however, open conflict among religious groups increased during the period covered by this report [1 July 2003, to 30 June 2004]. These

occurred most noticeably between Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and evangelical Protestants, and between Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and Muslims. In addition there continued to be pockets of interreligious tension and criticism among some religious groups.” [3f] (p5)

ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

- 6.29 The US Department of State’s 2004 Report on Human Rights noted that: “The Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC) and Islam are the dominant religions, accounting for nearly 90 percent of the population.” [3a] (p12)
- 6.30 IRIN news reported on 23 January 2003 that there were reports of clashes between police and demonstrators at Addis Ababa’s Lideta Mariam Orthodox Church on 26 December 2002. “These ashes were sparked by a dispute between the Church of Lideta Mariam and the Addis Ababa Diocese. The community has been resisting attempts by the office of the Patriarch to appoint a church administrator.” [14w]
- 6.31 The report added: “The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) said that the demonstrators were forced to plunge fully clothed into a barrel of cold water.... Deacons from the church who were arrested had their heads shaved and were forced to sleep in the open. Others were forced to sleep on gravel and run barefoot on stone grounds or walk along a road on their knees.” [14w]
- 6.32 Furthermore the report noted that:
- “The dispute between Lideta Mariam Church community and the Patriarch’s office has been going on for more than two years, despite the secular court of the church ordering the Lideta community to accept the appointee.” The report further mentions that: “The EHRCO called on both the Ethiopian Patriarch Abune Paulos – who heads the 25 million strong Ethiopian Orthodox Church – and the federal authorities to try to resolve the issue.” [14w]

PROTESTANTS

- 6.33 US Department of State, in its 2004 Report on Religious Freedom noted that:
- “Religious groups are not accorded duty-free status. Religious groups are given the free use of government land for churches, schools, hospitals, and cemeteries; however, schools and hospitals, regardless of how long they have been in operation, are subject to government closure and land forfeiture at any time. Religious groups, like private individuals or businesses, must apply to regional and local governments for land allocation...Minority religious groups have complained of discrimination in the allocation of government land for religious sites. Protestant groups occasionally complain that local officials discriminate against them when seeking land for churches and cemeteries.” [3f] (p2-4)
- 6.34 The US Department of State’s 2003 Report on Religious Freedom noted that:
- “The generally amicable relationship among religions in society contributed to religious freedom; however, open conflict among religious groups increased during the period covered by this report. These occurred most noticeably between Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and evangelical Protestants, and

between Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and Muslims. In addition there continued to be pockets of interreligious tension and criticism among some religious groups. For example, members of newer faiths, such as Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses, have encountered overt opposition from the public. Muslims and Orthodox Christians complain about proselytization by Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses. Ethiopian Orthodox leaders complain that sometimes Protestants fail to respect Orthodox holy days and Orthodox customs. Muslims complain that some Pentecostal preachers disparage Islam in their services. There were complaints by Muslim leaders that the EOC's desire to "show supremacy" sometimes caused irritation in the regions." [3g] (p4)

ISLAM

6.35 The US Department of State's 2004 Report on Religious Freedom noted that: "Approximately 45 percent of the population is Muslim, although many Muslims claim that the actual percentage is higher. Addis Ababa has 1 million Muslims, according to the Supreme Islamic Council. Islam is most prevalent in the Somali and Afar regions, as well as in all the major parts of Oromia." [3f] (p1)

6.36 The same Report noted that:

"While some Muslim leaders complained in the past that public school authorities sometimes interfered with their free practice of Islam because they prohibited the wearing of headscarves in schools, the leaders reported that the Ministry of Education (MOE) has accepted the practice of headscarves in schools not only in Addis Ababa but in regional areas as well. In the Southern Nations and Dire Dawa, there have been scattered problems but the local Islamic Council has addressed them. Three years ago the problems with headscarves centered on the complete covering (hijab) worn by some female students. The EIASC does not support this position, which they claim originates in the Middle East and not from the Koran." [3f] (p4)

6.37 The US Report also noted that:

"Leaders of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council (EIASC) struggled with Wahhabist fundamentalism within their ranks during the period covered by this report [1 July 2003, to 30 June 2004]. The growing influence of intolerant elements within Islamic communities in the country, aided by funding from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states for mosque construction and social services, continued to concern the Council....In January 2004, the Council voted to remove all executive members of the Council, and staunch anti-Wahhabists were elected to fill the top leadership positions. A Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative attended the election sessions to demonstrate the Government's interest in the issue." [3f] (p6)

6.38 The US Department of State's 2003 Report on Religious Freedom stated that:

"On April 26 [2003], on the evening of Ethiopian Orthodox Holy Saturday, Ethiopian Orthodox Christians in the District 28, Ward 4 area of Addis Ababa attacked members of the local Islamic council and destroyed a fence surrounding a plot of land upon which a mosque was to be built. Several persons were injured; at least one Islamic council member was hospitalized for several weeks. Fighting continued for three nights but paused during daytime

hours. Police initially reported to the scene of the fighting but left after not witnessing any fighting during daytime hours.” [3g] (p4)

6.39 Furthermore the Report added that:

“On January 13 [2003], a confrontation erupted in the Merkato area of Addis Ababa between Muslims and city officials who had come to demolish an illegally constructed mosque. Muslims defied the authorities’ right to tear down the mosque and threw rocks at city and police officials. Police fired into the air, but there were no reported deaths. Police seriously beat at least one man. City officials demolished the mosque and had plans to carry out other demolitions of illegally constructed mosques around the city.” [3g] (p4)

JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES

6.40 The US Department of State’s 2004 Report on Religious Freedom noted that: “There are more than 7,000 Jehovah’s Witnesses in the country....Members of the Jehovah’s Witnesses have stated in the past that they have leased their own plots of land in the capital, due to lack of suitable properties available from the Government. They have also purchased buildings to use as places of worship throughout Addis Ababa. In a few places in Oromiya plots have been free.” [3f] (p1-4)

ETHIOPIAN JEWS

6.41 The US Department of State’s 2003 Report on Religious Freedom noted that: “In Addis Ababa and western Gondar, in the Amhara region, there are very small concentrations of Ethiopian Jews (Falashas) and those who claim that their ancestors were forced to convert from Judaism to Ethiopian Orthodoxy (Feles Mora).” [3g] (p1)

6.42 The BBC, in a report dated 16 February 2003, stated that:

“The Israeli Government has announced that it will allow the immigration of another 20,000 Ethiopians of Jewish origin....Most of them are from the Falash Mura community, who were originally Jewish, but were forced to convert to Christianity in the 19th Century....The last mass immigration of Ethiopian Jews was in 1991, when Israel organised a dramatic airlift of 15,000 people who had fled fighting at the end of Ethiopia’s civil war.” [4t]

6.43 The BBC, in a report dated 9 January 2004, stated that: “The Israeli Government are to speed up the moving of the remaining 18,000 Ethiopian Jews to the Middle East, says Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom....however, Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin, speaking alongside Mr Shalom, said a mass migration was not needed as Ethiopians were free to travel wherever they wished.” [4u]

(See [Ethnic Minorities](#)).

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

6.44 The US State Department’s 2004 Report on Human Rights noted that:

“The Constitution provides for freedom of assembly; however, the Government restricted this right in practice. Organizers of large public meetings or demonstrations must notify the Government 72 hours in advance and obtain a permit. There were several reports during the year [2004] that permits were denied to opposition political parties. Opposition parties also reported long, unexplained delays by the regional authorities in issuing permits and last minute revocations of permits.” [3a] (p11)

- 6.45 It further noted that: “Opposition political parties reported that their supporters were the targets of frequent and systematic violence by ruling party supporters during the year [2004], often after leaving meetings.” [3a] (p11)

- 6.46 The Report goes on to state that:

“The Constitution provides for freedom of association and the right to engage in unrestricted peaceful political activity; however, the Government limited this right in practice...The Government required political parties to register with the National Election Board (NEB). Parties that did not participate in two consecutive national elections were subject to deregistration. There were approximately 69 organized political parties; 13 were national parties, and the remainder operated only in limited areas. There were no reports during the year [200] that any political party had its registration revoked.” [3a] (p11)

POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

- 6.47 The US State Department, in its 2004 Human Rights Report stated that: “Political participation remained closed to a number of organizations that had not renounced violence and did not accept the Government as a legitimate authority.” [3a] (p14)

- 6.48 The BBC reported in an article on 10 June 2005 that:

“Young Ethiopians were in the forefront of this week’s protests against alleged electoral fraud – and many of those who were killed and arrested were young students....More than 500 students were arrested on Monday and Tuesday, before 26 people were shot dead on Wednesday. Africa’s youth often bear the brunt of political violence, while many of the continent’s leaders are in their 60s or 70s.” The report further noted: “On 16 June 1976 a spontaneous uprising by students in Soweto was brutally suppressed by the police and hundreds were killed.” [4v]

- 6.49 On 3 March 2004, IRIN news reported that:

“Ethiopia’s human rights group on Wednesday condemned the mass arrests and physical abuse in January [2004] of hundreds of university students in the capital, Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) said federal officers had rounded up 349 students belonging to the Oromo ethnic group before transporting them to a detention centre....The students – members of the country’s largest ethnic group – had then been forced to march barefoot or on their knees along a gravel path for several hours.” [14x]

- 6.50 The article further added:

“The mass arrests, which took place in late January, were sparked after a disturbance erupted on the university campus. It followed a dispute between the students and the university authorities over a cultural show supported by the Oromo People’s Democratic Organization (OPDO), one of four political parties in the ruling coalition, the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front.” [14x]

6.51 The BBC reported in July 2002 that:

“The European Union (EU) demanded a public inquiry into disturbances in Southern Ethiopia earlier in the year, which left an estimated 128 dead...these people had died during an outbreak of violence in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Regional State (SNNPRS) in March. This occurred during a dispute over the political rights of the minority Sheko and Majenger ethnic groups in the town of Tepi, capital of the Yeki district. Tepi is about 700 km south-west of Addis Ababa... EU sources say that the head of the local police spoke of 128 fatalities. The opposition claim that between 500 and 1,000 died.” [4w]

6.52 The report goes on to state that: “Between 400 and 1,000 people were arrested after the violence. Most have since been released but 269 people were still in detention at the time of the EU delegation’s visit.” [4w]

6.53 IRIN News reported on 17 July 2002 that the European Union has called on Ethiopia to hold a public enquiry into the clashes. “The EU’s call comes after Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi discussed the killings with EU head Romano Prodi. They also discussed the May shootings in Awasa in which 17 people were killed in clashes between demonstrators and police. The EU has also called for an inquiry into that incident.” [14y]

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

6.54 The US Department of State, in its Human Rights Report 2004, stated that:

“The law mandates a minimum wage of approximately \$14 (120 Birr) per month for all wage earners in both the private and public sectors; in addition, each industry and service sector established its own minimum wage. For example, public sector employees, the largest group of wage earners, earned a minimum wage of approximately \$20 (175 Birr) per month; employees in the banking and insurance sector had a minimum wage of \$23 (200 Birr) per month. According to the Office of the Study of Wages and Other Remuneration, these wages did not provide a decent standard of living for a worker and family. Consequently most families needed to have at least two wage earners to survive, which forced many children to leave school early. In addition, only a small percentage of the population was involved in wage labor employment, which was concentrated largely in urban areas.” [3a] (p22)

6.55 The 1994 Constitution and the 1993 Labour Law give the majority of employees the right to form and join trades unions and bargain collectively. [9] (p17)

6.56 The US Department of State, in its 2004 Human Rights Report, claimed that:

“Approximately 300,000 workers were union members.” [3a] (p20) The Report goes on to note that: “The law specifically excludes teachers and civil servants,

including judges, prosecutors, and security service workers, from organising unions.” [3a] (p20) The Report further adds: “The law also prohibits workers who provide essential services from striking, including air transport and railway service workers, electric power suppliers, bus operators, gas station personnel, hospital and pharmacy personnel, bank employees, firemen, postal and telecommunications personnel, and urban sanitary workers.” [3a] (p21)

6.57 The US Department of State, in its Human Rights Report 2003, stated that:

“There was no requirement that unions belong to the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU), which included all nine federations organized by industrial and service sectors rather than by region. Despite its claims to the contrary, CETU leadership was aligned with the ruling party and did not fight vigorously for workers’ rights. Findings of widespread corruption in 2002 within CETU’s leadership had not resulted in any disciplinary actions by year’s end [2003]. In January, four members of CETU’s nine-member executive committee, who criticized the majority five-member block’s decisions were forced from office and replaced by four members hand-picked by the Government.” [3b] (p25)

6.58 The Report further noted that: “The minimum number of workers required to form a union was 20. All unions had to be registered; however, the Government retained the authority to cancel union registration. The law stipulates that a trade organization may not act in an overtly political manner.” [3b] (p25)

6.59 The same Report stated that:

“The law prohibits anti-union discrimination by employers against union members and organizers; however, unions reported that union activists frequently were fired. Unlawful dismissal suits often took years to resolve because of case backlogs in the labor courts. According to labor leaders, a number of court cases in which workers were terminated for union activities were pending after 4 or 5 years. There were grievance procedures for hearings on allegations of discrimination brought by individuals or unions. Employers found guilty of anti-union discrimination were required to reinstate workers fired for union activities.” [3b] (p25)

6.60 The Report also noted that:

“The ETA has been a particular target for government harassment. ETA membership continued to decrease significantly during the year due to government intimidation and restrictions on ETA activities; membership was an estimated 95,000 at year’s end [2003], down from 110,000 in 2002. Although the Government granted recognition to the independent ETA, all public school teachers were still forced to subsidize the government-created and controlled teacher’s union (also called ETA) with mandatory monthly contributions of \$0.23 (2 birr) that were automatically withheld from their monthly salaries. The International Labor Organization (ILO) Committee of Experts cited the Government’s interference as an abrogation of the basic right of association.” [3b] (p25)

PEOPLE TRAFFICKING

6.61 The US State Department’s 2004 Report on Human Rights notes that:

“The law prohibits trafficking in persons; however, there were numerous reports that persons were trafficked to, from, and within the country. Child prostitution was a problem, particularly in urban areas. The criminal code applied only to women and children trafficked for the purposes of prostitution; such trafficking was punishable by up to 5 years imprisonment and a fine of \$1,150 (10,000 birr). Laws provide for fines and prison sentences of up to 20 years. Despite the arrests of suspected traffickers during the year [2004], there had been no successful prosecutions of traffickers in persons by year’s end.” [3a] (p18)

- 6.62 The Report goes on to note that: “NGOs reported that impoverished girls as young as age 11 were recruited to work in houses of prostitution where they were kept uninformed of the risks of HIV/AIDS infection and other sexually transmitted diseases. A 2003 Family Health International Report indicated that customers targeted younger girls because they were believed to be free of sexually transmitted diseases.” [3a] (p18)

- 6.63 The Report moves on to state that:

“A 2003 study by a foreign government on the problem of internal trafficking of women and children confirmed that the problem is pervasive. The overwhelming majority of respondents confirmed that they were trafficked from rural areas to Addis Ababa and other urban centres, lured by false promises of employment. Of the 459 respondents, 46 percent were illiterate and 49 percent had completed no more than a grade 8 education. Upon arrival at their new destinations, 54 percent worked as domestic servants, but that number dropped to 9 percent as the trafficked women and children took jobs in bars, became sex workers, or begged on the street.” [3a] (p18)

- 6.64 The US State Department’s 2004 Report on Human Rights also noted that: “Training programs for police officers on the criminal aspects of trafficking were ongoing during the year. These institutions have limited resources and jurisdiction to protect or intervene in cases of prosecution of offending employers.” [3a] (p18)

- 6.65 IRIN news reported in an article on 29 June 2004:

“The first-ever centre to help victims of trafficking opened in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, on Tuesday. It will offer support to the estimated 40,000 women and girls believed to be victims of trafficking, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).....The women will be offered shelter, medical assistance and psychosocial counselling at the US \$412,000 centre, which was funded by the US Agency for International Development....The Meraf (Amharic for New Chapter) Centre, which will accommodate up to 12 victims of trafficking at a time, is run by a local NGO, the Good Samaritan Association.” [14z]

- 6.66 The US State Department’s 2004 Report on Human Rights noted that:

“Private entities arranged for overseas work and, as a result, the number of women sent to Middle Eastern countries, particularly Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates, as domestic or industrial workers remained a significant problem during the year [2004]. These women typically were trafficked through Djibouti, Yemen, and Syria. The Chief of the

Investigation and Detention Center in Lebanon reported that 30,000 Ethiopian women worked in Beirut, the vast majority of whom were trafficked. During the year, the Government also began registering persons seeking employment overseas. Approximately 50 percent of these women were not able to return legally to their home country.” [3a] (p18)

- 6.67 The US State Department’s 2003 Report on Human Rights noted that:

“There was a network of persons in Addis Ababa based in the tourism and trade sectors who were heavily involved in soliciting potential clients, recruiting young girls, arranging travel, and fabricating counterfeit work permits, travel documents, and birth certificates. There were reports from the EWLA [Ethiopian Women’s Lawyers Association] that some domestic workers abroad were subjected to abusive conditions, including sexual exploitation. In addition, the employers of domestic laborers sometimes seized passports, failed to pay salaries, and overworked their employees. Some domestics were forced to work for their employers’ relatives without additional pay. Domestics were forced to pay a monetary penalty for leaving their employment early.” [3b] (p29)

- 6.68 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that:

“There was almost no government assistance, in the form of counseling or other support services, to trafficked victims who returned to the country. The government provided limited consular assistance in a few cases. EWLA provided limited legal assistance to such victims. The Federal Police’s Women’s Affairs Bureau, in collaboration with the media, continued to implement a public awareness program on the dangers of migrating to Middle Eastern countries.” [3a] (p18)

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

- 6.69 The Constitution provides for freedom of travel and residence, both internally and abroad, and allows emigration and repatriation. [9] (p11)
- 6.70 The US State Department Report on Human Rights 2004 noted that: “The law requiring citizens and residents to obtain an exit visa before departing the country was eliminated in July. Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin had their status regularized by the Government.” [3a] (p12)

6.B HUMAN RIGHTS: SPECIFIC GROUPS

ETHNIC GROUPS

- 6.71 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 documented that:

“There were more than 80 ethnic groups living in the country. The Oromo were the largest single group, accounting for 40 percent of the population. Although many groups influenced the political and cultural life of the country, Amharas and Tigrayans from the northern highlands played a dominant role. The federal system has boundaries drawn roughly along major ethnic lines, and regional states had much greater control over their affairs. Most political parties remained primarily ethnically based.” [3a] (p19)

ETHNIC DIVISIONS

6.72 The same Report goes on to state that:

“The government policy of ethnic federalism led to the creation of individual constituencies to ensure representation in the HPR of all major ethnic groups. Small ethnic groups were not represented in the legislature. There were 23 nationality groups in 6 regional states that did not have a sufficient population to qualify for constituency seats; however, individuals from these nationality groups competed for 23 special seats in the 548-seat HPR in the 2000 elections.” [3a] (p15)

6.73 The US State Department’s 2004 Report additionally noted that: “There were continued incidents of ethnic conflict during the year, particularly in the western, southern, and eastern parts of the country. The Oromo group and the Government engaged in many clashes. There were also clashes among ethnic groups in Gambella, Southern Nations, and Somali regions.” [3a] (p19)

6.74 The Report goes on to state that: “The military remained an ethnically diverse organization; however, diversity was less common in the higher ranks among officer personnel which was dominated by the TPLF. There were unconfirmed reports that soldiers targeted Oromos for abuse during the year.” [3a] (p19)

6.75 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 states that:

“Security forces were involved in ethnic clashes during the year [2004], most prominently in the Gambella disturbances that began in December 2003 and continued until May [2004]. In December 2003, unknown assailants, presumed to be Anuaks, ambushed a vehicle near the village of Itang, Gambella Region and killed eight government officials of ethnic groups not indigenous to Gambella Region. For 3 days, civilian mobs, with police and military present, killed more than 100 members of the Anuak tribe in retaliation. Parliament appointed a commission to investigate the killings and the possible involvement of the military in killing civilians. The parliamentary commission found that 65 persons had died, and that government soldiers killed 13 of them. Other accounts, including from a Parliament member from Gambella who witnessed the incident, indicated the number killed by the military was considerably higher.” [3a] (p19-20)

6.76 The Report goes on to state that:

“Sporadic episodes of violence in the Gambella region between armed indigenous Anuaks on one side, and government forces and settlers from highland areas on the other, continued throughout the first half of the year [2004]. Some incidents were severe: Fighting between soldiers and Anuaks near Fugnido in late January reportedly resulted in 50 deaths, including civilians, and clashes near Dimma on January 29 and 30 [2004] left 196 persons dead. Many schools and clinics in the area outside Gambella were looted and burned; and farming was all but abandoned.” [3a] (p20)

6.77 The Report then adds: “On June 9 and 10, 54 persons died in clashes between the Ogaden and Mejerti tribes in Warder Zone, Somali Region. The cause of the clashes remained unclear at year’s end [2004].” [3e] (p20)

- 6.78 The Report further adds: “Unlike in previous years, there were no reports of ethnic conflicts between refugees and local residents....Unlike in previous years, there were no official reports of discrimination against Eritreans.” [3a] (p20)
- 6.79 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2003 noted that:
- “In May [2003], the Government reportedly completed its investigation into the March 2002 ethnic violence between the Sheko-Mejjangar and Manja and the Sheka and Bench-Maji in Yeki District, Southern Region, that resulted in the deaths of approximately 600 to 800 persons and displacement of 5,800 persons because of the violence. There was no further information at year’s end [2003] on the 41 policemen, 39 militia members, and 11 administrative officials reportedly arrested for their involvement in the clashes.” [3b] (p24)
- 6.80 The Report further notes:
- “Local officials in Dereshe Woreda, Southern Region, confirmed that certain Dereshe Woreda officials had been implicated in the April 2002 violence between the Deresha and the Zaise tribes over a land dispute that left several persons dead and numerous houses destroyed. Local ruling party officials, including the former district administrator, were found guilty of inciting the violence between the previously peaceful groups.” [3b] (p24)
- 6.81 The Report adds: “By year’s end [2003], there was no further development in the October 2002 killing of at least 31 Afar women in North Shoa Zone, Amhara Region. In 2002, police detained seven of the eight suspected killers for questioning, one of whom was killed while in prison.” [3b] (p24)
- 6.82 The Report further mentions:
- “In December [2003], there were a number of reports of individual killings of members of other ethnic groups by ethnic Anuaks, and vice-versa. On December 13, unknown assailants ambushed a vehicle and killed eight government officials, of ethnic groups not indigenous to Gambella Region, near the village of Itang, in Gambella Region. From December 13 to 16, a mob including police, military, and civilians reportedly killed more than 100 members of the Anuak tribe in retaliation for the deaths of the 8 government workers. The Government reported only 40 persons killed. There was a government investigation ongoing at year’s end [2003]; however, no action had been taken against persons involved.” [3b] (p24)
- 6.83 The Report goes on to state that:
- “In May, June, and July [2003], inter-clan clashes erupted in the Bench-Maji Zone in the south, and 36 persons were killed, according to EHRCO. For example, on June 23, Kidad Gacha, Chairman of Beru Kebele and an ethnic Dizi, shot and killed two Surma tribesmen, a Dizi woman, and a 2-year-old child. The next day, Surma tribesmen raided Beru Kebele, killed 12 persons, and looted property. A total of 1,116 Dizi tribesmen were displaced. Kidad Gacha was taken into police custody.” [3b] (p24)

- 6.84 Additionally the Report goes on to state that: "From September 29 to 30 [2003], clashes broke out between Surma and Anuak tribesmen following the killing of an Anuak woman by Surma men. On September 30, armed Anuak tribesmen shot and killed 20 Surma tribesmen engaged in gold mining in Naymei Kebele, in Surma Woreda." [3b] (p24)
- 6.85 The Report further noted: "From November 28 to December 6 [2003], approximately 55 persons were reported killed in clashes between the Gura and Dawa tribes in Goro Woreda, Oromiya Region." [3b] (p24)

LANGUAGES IN ETHIOPIA

- 6.86 The Constitution provides for equal recognition for all Ethiopian languages although Amharic is the working language of the Federal Government. [9] (p3)
- 6.87 Kenneth Katzner, in his book *Languages of the World*, stated that: "Amharic, the national language, is spoken by about a third of the population, or approximately 20 million people. Tigrinya (4 million speakers) is spoken in the northern province of Tigre, Gurage (one million) southwest of Addis Ababa, and Harai (50,000) in the city of Harar. All of these languages are of the Semitic family and are descended from Geez, the classical literary language of Ethiopia." [10] (p341)
- 6.88 Katzner goes on to state that: "The other main languages are of the Cushitic family. The most important is Oromo (Galla) (20 million speakers), spoken in the west, south, and east of Addis Ababa. Sidamo (5 million) is spoken in the southwest, and Somali (3 million) in the southeast. English is widely spoken in official circles in Ethiopia, while Arabic and Italian are understood in a number of places." [10] (p341)

OROMOS

- 6.89 The CIA factbook on Ethiopia (updated on 30 June 2005) stated that the Oromo People account for 40 per cent of the population, which makes them the majority group in Ethiopia. [7] (p3) The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that: "They are predominant in southern, south-eastern and south-western Ethiopia but also live in the highland areas." [11] (p413)
- 6.90 The World Directory of Minorities (1997) goes on to note that: "They are diverse in terms of their culture, social organization and religion, although most retain some features of their unique and complex generation-grading system, 'gada'. In some areas they are too assimilated with the Amhara to be easily organised into a disciplined national opposition." [11] (p413)
- 6.91 It further added:
- "Historically Oromo have never formed a single state but were organised in small societies of clans and villages. There are four main groups: western Oromo, mainly in 'Wollegga', many of whom have been Christianised by missionary churches; northern Oromo, of Mecha-Tulam, modern Shoa and the area to the south, who are more integrated into Amhara culture than other Oromo groups, are mostly Christians of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and speak Amharic; southern Oromo, who often have semi-nomadic lifestyles and are not incorporated into any larger regional or religious unit. And Borana,

believed by some to be the seminal branch of the Oromo because of their rigid observance of the 'gada' social system, and who live in an arid area of Ethiopia along the border with Kenya. Eastern Oromo of Haraghe include the Muslim population of Harar and Dire Dawa, among others. This group has strong links to the Arab world and its local leaders have a strong Muslim orientation. The term Oromia, signifying an independent Oromo state, is important to the Oromo and the OLF [Oromo Liberation Front], allowing them to consolidate their various regional and related groups into one Oromo nation." [11] (p413-414)

6.92 The Africa South of the Sahara 2005 Report stated that:

"The Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) was founded in 1990 by the TPLF to promote its cause in Oromo areas." [1a] (p444) IRIN news stated in a report dated 25 June 2001 that Dr Negasso Gidada who was President of the Federal Republic from 1995, had been "expelled from his Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) party".... [14aa] The Africa South of the Sahara 2003 Report stated that Gidada was expelled from the EPRDF although he continued as President of the country until October 2001, when he was replaced by Lieutenant Girma Wolde Giorgis. [1a] (p430) The OPDO won 178 seats in the House of Peoples Representatives in the May 2000 elections. [1a] (p443)

6.93 IRIN news reported on 3 March 2004:

"The mass arrests and physical abuse in January [2004] of hundreds of university students in the capital, Addis Ababa." [14ab] Amnesty International, on 23 January 2004, stated that: "The first eight Oromo students...were arrested on the Addis Ababa University campus on 18 January [2004], and are reportedly currently held at Maikelawi police central investigation centre in Addis Ababa. Over 300 students who called for their release were later arrested...22 students are still detained but others have mostly been released. Those still held are at risk of ill-treatment in custody." [6h]

6.94 Amnesty goes on to state that:

"The first eight were arrested after protests at a cultural performance at the university, staged by the Oromia Region ruling party. The performance broke up when several Oromo students protested to Oromia regional state officials about the recent federal government decision to transfer the regional state capital from Addis Ababa to Adama (also known as Nazareth), a town 100 kilometres south-east of Addis Ababa. Police arrested the eight students that evening, and accused them of causing damage to university property, including broken windows." [6h]

AMHARAS

6.95 AFRICAGUIDE.COM, on their website, describe the Amaras as a:

"Politically and culturally dominant ethnic group of Ethiopia. They are located primarily in the central highland plateau of Ethiopia and comprise the major population element in the provinces of Begemder and Gojjam and in parts of Shoa and Wallo. In terms of the total Ethiopian population, however, the Amhara are a numerical minority. The national population has usually been placed at between 14 and 22 million....It is generally estimated that the

Amhara, together with the closely related Tigre, constitute about one-third of this total population.” [16]

6.96 The article goes on to state:

“Their national clothes are basically white, whether the shawls and light blankets worn over the shoulders by the men or the white dresses and wraps worn by the ladies....Life in the Amhara farming society is hard. Many Amhara live in the harsh and stark mountains, easy to defend, but making it difficult to travel and gain provisions. The men in the fields, the women around the house and the children at home and watching the sheep--all work very hard. The fields are plowed with oxen, seeds are sown and harvested by hand, and the harvest is threshed by the feet of animals. In the home, the primary cooking fuel is the dried dung of the farm animals. Nothing is wasted.” [16]

6.97 The article continues:

“Though their life is hard, the Amhara are proud people, proud of their ethnicity, their religion, their special place in the world. Their culture is strong, developed over many centuries, and it has withstood the incursions of outside governments and religions....Settlements are typically built on or near hilltops, as protection against flooding. Farms are terraced on the hillsides to prevent erosion and hold water for crops. The ‘hamlet’ is usually patrilineal, with sons building their homes in the father’s location. Girls normally marry at age 14, and the groom is three to five years older....Children receive little discipline until about age five to seven, but thereafter are socialized with authoritarian discipline. Boys herd cows and sheep and girls assist their mothers in watching babies and gathering wood.” [16]

6.98 The Africa South of the Sahara 2003 Report noted that Amharas are represented in the Government by the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), which won 134 seats in the 2000 elections and is affiliated to the ruling EPRDF. [1a] (p443-444)

SIDAMA/SIDAMO

6.99 The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that:

“There are eight distinct groups of Sidama people living in parts of Shoa and Sidamo-Borana provinces. They speak Cushitic and have an ‘ensete’ (false banana) planting culture. Before Oromo migration, the Sidama inhabited almost the whole of southern Ethiopia. Oromo used the term, ‘sidama’ meaning ‘foreigner’, and one of the eight groups still retains that name. An interchange of Sidama and Oromo institutions took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Consequently some are animist, others Christian or Muslim. By 1891 the Sidama people had been incorporated into the Ethiopian Empire.” [11] (p414)

SOMALIS

6.100 The CIA factbook on Ethiopia (updated 30 June 2005) stated that:

“The Somali people account for around 6% of the population.” [7] (p3) The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that Somalis “populate the Ogaden

area...Disintegration of the state in Somalia in the late 1980's and early 1990's led to the few remaining Somali organizations in Ogaden rejecting irredentism and reorientating themselves towards Ethiopian political life. However Somali and other Muslim organizations have limited influence and the Ogaden National Liberation Front is pushing for rights of self-determination and possible secession." [11] (p414)

- 6.101 The allAfrica.com website reports that an article from the Addis Tribune news dated 5 August 2005 states:

"In the late 1970s, Somalia and Ethiopia went to war over Ogaden. Somalia claimed Ogaden belonged to it and that the colonial boundaries ignored centuries-old migration patterns of Somalis into what is now part of Ethiopia....Somalia lost the war, but that didn't restore calm in Ogaden. There are several Ethiopian opposition groups operating in the area, including the Ogaden National Liberation Front, or ONLF. Another group, al-Ittihad, an Islamist organization linked to al-Qaida, according to experts, has petered out over the last decade." [2a]

- 6.102 The article also states:

"Terrorist attacks in eastern Ethiopia this week have drawn attention to the plight of ethnic Somalis living in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, where opposition groups have accused Ethiopia's government of massive human rights abuses over the last decade, including hundreds of killings and disappearances.... Authorities there say the violence was politically motivated, coming just two weeks before voters in the region cast their ballots in Ethiopia's parliamentary election, in which most of the country voted in May [2005]....But the killings have focused international attention on the plight of those living in Ogaden, an arid region roughly the size of Britain. Most of the four million people are Somalis. The region is important seasonal grazing land for cattle, goats and camels migrating from Somalia." [2a]

BERTA ('SHANKELLA', BENI, SHANGUI)

- 6.103 The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that:

"The Berta regard themselves as descended from a single family whom they trace back to 1720. Islam was established among them by 1855. They were conquered 1897-8 by imperial forces while their leader, Shaikh Khojali, preserved their autonomy by regular tribute of alluvial gold...They and other Nilotic peoples have been labelled pejoratively as 'Shankella', although this was officially discharged by Haile Selassie. Many Berta were brought to the capital as slaves. Slave trading was a business which the Shaikh Khojali family conducted with Sudan-based traders as well as Ethiopians. Berta were much desired as slaves by raiders on both sides of the Sudan-Ethiopian border." [11] (p414)

AFAR

- 6.104 The CIA factbook on Ethiopia (updated 30 June 2005) noted that:

"The Afar make up only around 4% of the total Ethiopian population." [7] (p4)
The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that: "At the time of its [the state

of Eritrea] inception, the Afar Liberation Front (ALF) leader, Ali Mirah Anferi, declared that the ALF's goal would be to establish an independent Islamic State for the Afars. Its boundaries were to be decided by Afar ethnic habitation, including the Awash River Basin and neighbouring territories in the southern part of Eritrea. Mengistu's creation of an autonomous province of Assab did nothing to settle the Afar issue, since the most fertile land in the Awash Valley remained in Amhara control." [11] (p414)

GURAGE

6.105 According to the CIA factbook on Ethiopia (30 June 2005):

"The Gurage people make up around 2% of the Ethiopian population." [7] (p4) The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that "There are 14 to 16 groups in the Gurage cluster. The western group formed a political federation in the mid-nineteenth century consisting of seven clans inhabiting an area around Lake Zway in Shoa. They are 'ensete' cultivators like their neighbours in Sidamo. Some claim descent from a Tigrayan noble who came to conquer them in the fourteenth century. Eastern Gurage (Soddo) trace their origins to the Harar area from which they fled during the sixteenth century invasion of Ahmad ibn Ibrahim. An attempt at unifying the western Gurage under one leader was allegedly made by a Christian commander who came to relieve them of Oromo raids. Emperor Menelik II incorporated both eastern and western Gurage into the empire by 1889. Gurage men weave and market cloth. Certain sub-castes tan hides or smelt iron. Pottery is a woman's craft. Gurage women continue to be excluded from land ownership. The Soddo Gurage reportedly follow the custom of circumcising both boys and girls at infancy, while the western group are said to circumcise both boys and girls (clitoridectomy) at the age of eight and ten respectively. Christian, Muslim and traditional Gurage belief in the god Waq, co-exist to varying degrees depending on the area. In the country and in cities Gurage are adept at forming self-help societies and are active traders." [11] (p415)

ANUAK

6.106 The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that:

"Associated with Sudanese penetration of a vaguely defined 'Ethiopia', these people date from the first millennium BCE [Before Common Era] with a culture preoccupied with cattle raiding and millet growing. The Anuak are hunters, agriculturalists and fishers living in the fertile Gambela forest region of south-western Ethiopia. At the end of 1979, their land was seized by the government and there were attempts to draft them into the army and into forced labour on collective farms. Many Anuak fled to the bush in an attempt to reach Sudan and were shot or imprisoned. Their numbers have halved from a generation ago and they have been displaced from their traditional lands as northerners resettled in the area." [11] (p415)

6.107 Amnesty International, in a Report covering events from January–December 2004, stated that:

"A Commission of Inquiry headed by the President of the Supreme Court was set up by parliament in April following numerous killings of members of the Anuak ethnic group in Gambela town in December 2003. In July the

Commission reported that 65 people were killed – 61 Anuak people and four members of highland ethnic groups – and 75 wounded, and that nearly 500 houses had been burned down and plundered. The Commission noted a background of ethnic conflict in the region. Three days of killings starting on 13 December 2003 were sparked off by the public display of the bodies of eight people allegedly killed by an Anuak armed group. The Commission criticized the regional authorities for not taking steps to prevent violence and acknowledged that federal soldiers were involved in the killings alongside highlanders. The Commission made no recommendations regarding prosecution of those responsible, whether police, military or civilians. To AI's knowledge, no one had been brought to justice by the end of 2004 for the killings of Anuak people....According to unofficial sources and survivors, the number of people killed was several hundred and many women were raped. The violence also spread to other towns and villages in the region. Hundreds of people were detained and tortured, including civil servants and students, supposedly on suspicion of involvement in the murder of the eight. They were still detained without charge or trial at the end of 2004." [6b] (p2)

- 6.108 A spate of killings in the Gambella region in December 2003 was reported by IRIN on 8 January 2004. "The violence was sparked by an attack on a UN-plated vehicle in early December. Eight people in the vehicle were killed, including three government refugee workers who were trying to set up a new refugee camp in the region. Their bodies were badly mutilated." [14ac]
- 6.109 The report continued: "A radical group from the local Anuak tribe was blamed for the attack, which took place as the government officials drove to Odier – the proposed new camp for Nuer and Dinka refugees from Sudan. The reprisals that followed against the alleged perpetrators were ferocious. Hundreds of homes were burnt to the ground and the killings continued over several days." [14ac]
- 6.110 IRIN, on 12 February 2004, reported that fighting was renewed in February 2004 when 196 people were killed in a single day. "The government blamed the renewed fighting on armed elements among the Anyuak (sic) – an ethnic group in Gambella which fears it is losing political power there." [14ad]
- 6.111 The recent violence in the Gambella region has its roots in history. The BBC news report, dated 12 February 2004 notes that:
- "Aid agencies say the Anyuak (sic) people feel they have been gradually displaced from their traditional lands. The problem began in the 1980s – when the previous government used forced resettlement to bring about 50,000 people from Ethiopia's exhausted central highlands to the fertile, but swampy, malaria-infested Gambella. Pressure increased as thousands of ethnic Nuer sought shelter in the region to escape from the Sudanese civil war...Last year the authorities sacked a number of Anyuak (sic), including some policemen. They are reported to have taken their weapons and gone into the bush, carrying out sporadic attacks." [4x]
- 6.112 The US State Department's Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: "There were reports during the year that army members raped Anuak women during raids on villages in Gambella region. The Government did not open an investigation into the December 2003 rape of two Anuak women at gunpoint by soldiers in the town of Echeway, Gambella Region, during the outbreak of violence against

Anuaks (see Section 5), an attack that was reported by credible witnesses.” [3a] (p4)

- 6.113 The Report further noted that: “A Parliament-appointed commission investigating ethnic violence in the Gambella Region occurring between December 2003 and May 2004 found evidence of military involvement in the extra-judicial killings of 13 Anuak civilians. On 20 March according to unconfirmed reports, soldiers seeking revenge for the death of a soldier were reported to have summarily executed eight elderly Anuak men in the village of Chobo.” [3a] (p2)

ADARE/GEFU (HARAR)

- 6.114 The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that:

“The Oromo and Amhara residents of greater Harar call the inner-city residents Adare. There are about 30,000 in the old city, with a distinct language and culture. The Adare are distinguished for being the only people in Ethiopia to have developed a tradition centring on a large urban centre. In their own language the term for Adare is Gefu, literally, person of the city. Adare is also the language spoken in Harar and is written in Arabic characters. Harar is the premier Muslim city of Ethiopia. An overlapping social network is divided into kinship networks, groups and neighbours. The latter concerns itself with the expenses of weddings and funerals in a cooperative way. A school was established in 1972 to counter the central government effort to spread the Amharic language and restrict Islamic religious instruction. In 1975 the Dergue (sic) imposed a ‘kebele’ system of local government, as the neighbourhood groups refused to be politicized.” [11] (p415)

BETA ISRAEL

- 6.115 The World Directory of Minorities (1997) noted that: “Also known as the Ethiopian Jews, and until recently by the derogatory name Falasha (meaning stranger or exile in Ge’ez), at their peak in the seventeenth century there were over 1 million Beta Israel in Ethiopia. Before mass migration to Israel in the 1980’s they numbered approximately 30,000 and lived in Gondar province and the Simien Mountains in northern Ethiopia.” [11] (p415)

- 6.116 The report goes on:

“The Beta Israel perceive themselves to be Jewish, living a traditional form of life evolving from at least the fourteenth century, although some suggest that their origins are more ancient. Their ancestors were deprived of the right to hold land as a result of the north-west expansion of the core Abyssinian State. Beta Israel consider contact with Christians to be ritually impure, and this reinforced the self-identity of Beta Israel and allowed them to continue their religious and social life in the face of pressure to convert, while being excluded from positions of authority within the state. Their basic tenets are those of Judaism.” [11] (p415)

- 6.117 The report further adds:

“Most Ethiopian Jews lived in small rural communities in Gondar and Tigre provinces, where they suffered from prejudice at the hands of neighbouring peoples. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church opposed the development of Jewish

schools. After World War Two, they continued to face discrimination and suffer evictions, extortionate taxes and rents, and attacks on cemeteries. After the revolution of 1974, in theory the position of Beta Israel was improving because of the land reform. But Jews were often given inferior land and their freedom to travel was restricted. Beta Israel had much to gain from the land reforms and were made the target of the counter-revolutionary Ethiopian Democratic Union, composed of the old nobility and landowners in Gondar. During 1977-79 they were forced to flee remote villages and move to areas of greater concentration.” [11] (p415-416)

6.118 The World Directory of Minorities (1997) further noted that:

“They were also attacked by the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party for alleged Zionist tendencies. Substantial numbers of Jews were among the thousands tortured, imprisoned, and massacred in the 1978 ‘Red Terror’ campaigns waged by the Dergue (sic). In March 1984, at the height of the famine in northern Ethiopia, thousands of Beta Israel began to move to Sudan by foot. Several thousands lost their lives in transit, children were orphaned and separated from their parents, and disease and malnutrition were rife in the refugee camps. At the end of 1984 Operation Moses brought many more to Israel, and others left in 1991 in Operation Solomon.” [11] (p416)

ERITREANS IN ETHIOPIA

(also see Eritrean Report)

6.119 During the border war, the Government detained and deported Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin without due process. The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2001 noted that:

“The Government’s actions raised serious issues of due process since there were no preliminary hearings to determine the merits of the deportations, no right to counsel was provided to detainees, and detainees only had a very circumscribed opportunity to register protests. In addition the issue of the nationality of Eritrean-origin Ethiopians has not been settled yet. Heads of households were taken without warning, detained, and often deported via overland routes within 48 hours. Remaining family members were given arbitrary deadlines to sell property and sometimes were subjected to departure taxes based on estimated annual income and unpaid balances on government bank loans.” [3d] (p9)

6.120 The Report goes on to note that: “In August 1999, all Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin over 18 years of age who had taken part in the 1993 referendum on Eritrean independence were required to register with the SIRAA [Security, Immigration and Refugee Affairs Authority] and complete residence application forms. After registration applicants received identity cards and residence permits valid for 6 months.” [3d] (p9)

6.121 The US State Department’s Human Rights Report for 2004 stated that: “Most Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin were registered with the Government and held identity cards and 6-month residence permits to gain access to hospitals and other public services. However, there were anecdotal reports that indigent Eritreans were denied the right to seek free medical services by government officials at the local level.” [3a] (p12)

- 6.122 More recently, the ruling party-owned Walta Information Centre noted in an article dated 20 January 2004 that:

“Security, Immigration and Refugee Affairs Authority said it has issued a directive outlining duties Eritreans residing in Ethiopia are required to fulfill for eligibility. The Authority said in a statement yesterday said (sic) anyone bearing an Eritrean passport or possessing any document proving his/her Eritrean citizenship or who served for the Eritrean government in a job reserved for citizens only is considered an Eritrean.” [19b]

- 6.123 Moreover, the article continued:

“The directive states that those who did not opt for Eritrean citizenship will be considered as choosing their Ethiopian nationality, and thus shall maintain an Ethiopian citizenship. An Eritrean who registers in compliance of the directive and who wants to regain Ethiopian nationality shall be granted Ethiopian citizenship...Resident Eritreans will be granted permanent resident permits in line with the Immigration law, and those who could not own travel documents from their country, shall be granted foreigner passports, the authority said.” [19b]

- 6.124 In a further article dated 23 January 2004, Walta Information Centre noted that:

“The Security Immigration and Refugee Affairs Authority said that the newly issued directive with regard to Eritreans residing in Ethiopia emanate from the country’s commitment to abide by national and international laws as well as conventions it signed and the strong ties the peoples of the two countries enjoy. Briefing local journalists on the premises of the authority yesterday, immigration and Nationality Affairs Director Girma Balcha said that the objective of the directive is to enable Eritreans residing in Ethiopia to maintain their citizenship in a legal manner for the constitution of this country doesn’t allow one to have double citizenship. Ato Girma further said that any one with Eritrean passport and possessing other documents and is also served in offices only allowed for nationals maintains Eritrean citizenship. Eritreans who have voted for independence and lived in Ethiopia uninterrupted would also remain Eritrean nationals unless otherwise they appeal for change of citizenship, he said. However, Ato Girma said that those who had not voted and lived here uninterrupted would be granted permanent Ethiopian Citizenship. ‘This would be terminated if individuals attempt to produce fake documents or they stay outside Ethiopia for more than a year and also found undesirable to the nation’, Ato Girma stated. Those granted permanent Ethiopian citizenship are not allowed to serve at government offices, he added. Eligible Eritreans are allowed to run their own business and work in non-governmental institutions and have the right to possess property including farmlands if they are living in rural areas, according to Ato Girma.” [19c]

- 6.125 On 22 January 2004, the Ethiopian News Agency noted that: “The recently issued directive with regard to Eritreans residing in Ethiopia could benefit only those Eritreans who lived in Ethiopia prior to Eritrean independence and afterwards permanently, security, immigration and refugees affairs authority said...Those Eritreans coming from any country to Ethiopia either (sic) couldn’t benefit from the directive, he said.” [23a]

- 6.126 The US State Department's Report on Human Rights, 2004, notes that: "The law requiring citizens and residents to obtain an exit visa before departing the country was eliminated in July [2004]. Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin had their status regularized by the Government." [3a] (p12)

DEPORTATIONS AND REPATRIATIONS

- 6.127 The US State Department's 2004 Human Rights Report stated that:

"In 2002, the Government transferred at least 200 Eritrean military deserters who had been held at the Dedesa detention centre to a northern refugee camp. UNHCR processed 178 cases in 2002 and 94 during the year for resettlement to third countries. At year's end, it was unknown whether additional cases were still pending. As a result of the 1998 to 2000 war with Eritrea, thousands of persons were displaced internally. Of the approximately 350,000 IDPs resulting from the border war, approximately 225,000 IDPs have been resettled." [3a] (p13)

- 6.128 The US State Department's 2002 Human Rights Report stated that:

"The Government stopped deporting forcibly Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin after it signed the cessation of hostilities agreement with Eritrea in June 2000." [3c] (p9) However in July 2001, IRIN news reported that the ICRC [International Community of the Red Cross] refused to assist in the repatriation of a group of over seven hundred civilians concerned that they had not expressed their consent. [14ae] Human Rights Watch, in its 2002 Report, stated that: "Ethiopia forcibly expelled the 772 people it identified as Eritreans from its territory without prior notification to the International Committee of the Red Cross as anticipated under article 2 of the truce agreement." [8d] (p5)

- 6.129 The US State Department's 2004 Human Rights Report stated that: "During 2003, 1,579 cases of Eritrean civilians waiting to return to Eritrea in the country were pending with the ICRC....In 2002, the Government transferred at least 200 Eritrean military deserters who had been held at the Dedesa detention center to a northern refugee camp. UNHCR processed 178 cases in 2002 and 94 during the year for resettlement to third countries. At year's end [2004], it was unknown whether additional cases were still pending." [3a] (p12-13)

- 6.130 The US State Department's 2002 Human Rights Report stated that: "Detention and deportation was carried out only in conjunction with the ICRC. The Government, together with the ICRC, monitored the deportation or repatriation of 1,188 Eritrean POWs and 774 Eritrean civilians during the year [2002]. In 2001 approximately 80,000 to 100,000 Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin resided in the country; there were no updated statistics by year's end [2002]." [3c] (p18)

- 6.131 The US State Department's 2003 Human Rights Report stated that:

"The Government, together with the ICRC, monitored the repatriation of 177 Eritrean civilians to Eritrea during the year [2003]. During the year, 188 persons were resettled outside the country, and 1,579 cases were pending. Most Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin were registered with the Government and held identity cards and 6-month residence permits to gain access to hospitals and other public services. However, there were anecdotal reports that

indigent Eritreans were denied the right to seek free medical services by government officials at the kebele level.” [3b] (p17)

REPATRIATED ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES

6.132 The International Committee of the Red Cross reported on 25 February 2005:

“On 25 February 2005, 160 Ethiopian civilians were repatriated from Eritrea to Ethiopia under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)....In the same operation, 10 Eritrean civilians were repatriated from Ethiopia to Eritrea....Acting in its capacity as a neutral and independent intermediary, the ICRC carried out this repatriation with the cooperation of the authorities. ICRC delegates based in Eritrea, and an ambulance team of the Eritrean Red Cross accompanied the Ethiopian civilians on the first part of their journey, from Asmara, Eritrea’s capital, to the border. They provided food, water and medical assistance, and helped to transport the luggage. At the crossing point at Mereb River, the group was met by ICRC delegates based in Ethiopia, before being placed in the care of the Ethiopian authorities.” [13a] The ICRC had carried out a similar operation in 2004. The ICRC reported on 3 December 2004: “On 26 November, 200 Ethiopian civilians were repatriated from Eritrea to Ethiopia under the auspices of the ICRC. The group crossed the border at the Mereb river bridge, between the towns of Adi Quala in Eritrea and Rama in Ethiopia. Among those repatriated were eight children and three sick persons returning to their families in Ethiopia.” [13b]

WOMEN

6.133 The 1994 Constitution provides for the equality of women. [9] (p12-13) However the US State Department’s 2004 Human Rights Report noted that:

“Domestic violence, including wife beating and marital rape, was a pervasive social problem. There is no specific law regarding domestic violence or sexual harassment. While women had recourse to the police and the courts, societal norms and limited infrastructure prevented many women from seeking legal redress, particularly in rural areas. Social practices obstructed investigations and prosecutions in rape cases, and many women were not aware of their rights under the law. It was estimated that there were more than 1,000 rapes a year in Addis Ababa. The press continued to regularly report on rape cases, particularly where injury to minors resulted. Rape sentences were handed down in line with the 10 to 15 years prescribed by law. During the year [2004], the EWLA [Ethiopian Women’s Lawyers Association] conducted research on the number of rapes committed and the number of rape convictions handed down; however, the results had not been released by year’s end [2004].... During the year [2004], a court was established to try cases of sexual abuse against women and children.” [3a] (p15-16)

6.134 The US State Department’s 2004 Human Rights Report also noted that:

“Although illegal, the abduction of women and girls as a form of marriage continued to be practiced widely in the Oromiya and the Southern Regions, despite the Government’s attempts to combat this practice. Forced sexual relationships often accompanied most marriages by abduction, and women often were physically abused during the abduction. Many of those girls married

as early as the age of 7, despite the legal marriage age of 18. Abductions led to conflicts among families, communities, and ethnic groups. In cases of marriage by abduction, the perpetrator was not punished if the victim agreed to marry him (unless the marriage was annulled); even after a perpetrator was convicted, the sentence was commuted if the victim married him". There were some signs of growing public awareness of the problem of attacks on women and early marriage; in August [2004] a public demonstration took place in Dessie to protest the problem." [3a] (p16)

6.135 The same Report noted that:

"The Constitution states that all persons are equal before the law; however, the Government has not yet fully put into place mechanisms for the effective enforcement of these protections. The Family Law sets the legal marriage age for girls at 18, the same as for boys; elevates civil law above customary and religious law; allows for the legal sharing of property for unmarried couples who live together for at least 5 years; eliminates family arbitrators as a means of settling marital disputes in lieu of the court system; allows for the joint administration of common marital property; requires the courts to take into account the situation of children or the weakest member of the family in the event of divorce or separation; and imposes a 6-month waiting period on women seeking to remarry following divorce or the death of a spouse. However, regional councils had authority to determine family law for their respective regions." [3a] (p16)

6.136 The Report also stated:

"Discrimination against women was most acute in rural areas, where 85 percent of the population lived. The Civil Code and the Penal Code contained discriminatory regulations, such as the recognition of the husband as the legal head of the family and the sole guardian of children over 5 years old. Domestic violence was not considered a serious justification to obtain a divorce. There was only limited juridical recognition of common law marriage. Irrespective of the number of years the marriage existed, the number of children raised, and joint property, the woman was entitled to only 3 months' financial support if the common law relationship ended. A husband had no obligation to provide financial assistance to his family and, as a result, women and children sometimes were abandoned when there was a problem in the marriage. The law states that any property owned before marriage belongs to the spouse that had it. Any property gained during marriage is shared equally by the husband and wife. Thus a widow is entitled to her 50 percent share of property gained during the marriage; however, a wife does not have inheritance right to her deceased husbands share." [3a] (p16-17)

6.137 The Report further noted that:

"All land belonged to the Government. Although women could obtain government leases to land, and the Government had an explicit policy to provide equal access to land for women, this policy rarely was enforced in rural communities. According to the EWLA [Ethiopian Women's Lawyers Association], in nearly all regions, women do not have any access to land. They cannot inherit land, and the only way for them to gain access to land was via marriage. However, when the husband dies, other family members often take the land from the wife"....In urban areas, women had fewer employment

opportunities than men, and the jobs available did not provide equal pay for equal work.” [3a] (p17)

6.138 IRIN News reported on 18 May 2004:

“Ethiopia was awarded US \$1.5 million on Monday to promote women’s rights. The African Development Bank (ADB) pledged the money to help the country meet the global anti-poverty targets – known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – by 2015....Among key MDGs are those concerning the promotion of equal rights for women and their empowerment, as well as massive support for maternal health care. Experts regard improving the lives of women in health care and education as vital if global and Third World poverty is to be overcome.” [14af]

6.139 The Report goes on to state:

“In Ethiopia, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund, women often bear the brunt of poverty, poor health care and lack of education. Only six out of 10 are literate, while less than six percent can expect to receive skilled help during childbirth. Currently, one-fifth more boys than girls attend school....Securing additional funding for the promotion of women’s rights and democratic representation is crucial, according to the government and humanitarian agencies. The ADB money will be ploughed into the newly established Women’s Affairs Office (WAO) to provide institutional support....The government has pledged to place women at the heart of its development agenda, and accordingly established the WAO under the direction by Gifti Abasiya, the minister of state for women’s affairs. Although the country has a far-reaching constitution which promotes gender equality with a legal framework to implement it, officials admit that in reality it has its shortcomings.” [14af]

6.140 The US 2004 Human Rights Report noted that: “Of the 19 members of the Council of Ministers, 1 was a woman, 2 other women held ministerial positions, and a number of other women held senior positions. There were 42 women in the 548-seat HPR, and 9 of 113 members in the House of Federation were women. Of the 14 members of the Supreme Court, 3 were women.” [3e] (p15)

6.141 Trafficking of women is a growing problem. In an IRIN report dated 13 June 2003:

“The IOM says that illegal traffickers who prey on women could make up to 7,000 Ethiopian Birr (more than US \$800) for each victim they send overseas. The IOM say women aged between 18 and 25 are targeted by traffickers at colleges and in poor districts in towns and cities.” [14ag] The US State Department’s Human Rights Report 2004 noted that: “There were credible reports from the EWLA and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) that many female workers who traveled to the Middle East as industrial and domestic workers were abused. In August [2004], the Government opened a new consulate in Dubai, in part to assist Ethiopian women workers who were abused.” [3a] (p16)

For more information on this issue see section titled [People Trafficking](#)

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

6.142 The US State Department's 2004 Human Rights Report noted that:

"The majority of girls underwent some form of FGM. Clitoridectomies typically were performed 7 days after birth and consisted of an excision of the labia. Infibulation, the most extreme and dangerous form of FGM, was performed at any time between the age of 8 and the onset of puberty. According to the findings of a government national baseline survey released in 2003 on harmful traditional practices, 90 percent of women undergo one of four forms of FGM--circumcision, clitoridectomy, excision, and infibulation. The National Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices reported that, according to a national baseline survey, harmful practices against women, including FGM, abduction, and early marriage have declined from over 90 percent to 73 percent since 1992." [3a] (p16)

6.143 The same Report further noted that: "The Constitution and the penal code prohibit bodily injury; however, these provisions did not specifically outlaw FGM. The Government continued to update the penal code during the year. The Government also worked to discourage the practice of FGM through education in public schools and through broader mass media campaigns." [3a] (p16)

6.144 The Report also noted that:

"The Government took some measures to help eradicate FGM. For example, an official from South Omo Zone, Southern Region, said in July that an official from Hamer District was removed from office for forcing his wife to undergo FGM. The Hamer official subsequently was brought to justice by the District women's affairs bureau. The South Omo Zone Mobilization and Social Affairs Department Deputy Head reported that committees to eradicate harmful traditional practices were established in 197 localities through South Omo Zone. In Eastern Harerge Zone, police arrested 4 women who had allegedly circumcised 62 girls in 1 day; local residents allegedly tipped off the police following an intensive media campaign on the harmful effects of circumcision. Charges against the women were pending at year's end." [3a] (p16)

6.145 The World Organization Against Torture (OMCT) in its Report on the Rights of the Child in Ethiopia dated 26 June 2003 stated that:

"FGM in Ethiopia ranges from partial to complete excision of the external genitalia, which are then stitched to nearly closed in many cases. The ritual is practiced on girls between the ages of seven days and 16 years old. It is often performed in unsanitary settings by a community 'specialist' using an unclean blade. FGM has terrible effects on the child or young girl's state of health, both at the time and in the future. Apart from potentially fatal haemorrhages, there is a risk of tetanus or septicaemia from the very basic instruments used and neighbouring organs are often damaged due to the girl's distress." [29] (p13)

CHILDREN

6.146 The US State Department's 2004 Human Rights Report noted that: "The Government supported efforts by domestic and international NGOs that focused on children's social, health, and legal issues, despite its limited ability to provide improved health care and basic education." [3a] (p17)

6.147 The same Report additionally noted that:

“Child labour remained a serious problem, both in urban and rural areas. Under the law, the minimum age for wage or salary employment is 14 years; this age is consistent with the age for completing primary school educational requirements. Special provisions cover children between the ages of 14 and 18, including the prohibition of hazardous or night work. By law children between the ages of 14 and 18 years were not permitted to work more than 7 hours per day, work between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., work on public holidays or rest days, or perform overtime work. The Government defined hazardous work as work in factories or involving machinery with moving parts, or any work that could jeopardize children’s health....The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is designated to enforce child labour laws. While the Government made some effort to enforce these regulations within the formal industrial sector, social welfare activists, civic organizers, government officials, and employers agreed that child labor was pervasive throughout the country, particularly in agrarian areas and in the informal sector.” [3a] (p21)

6.148 The Report goes on to state that:

“In February [2003], the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs released the findings of a 2001 ILO-funded survey on child labour. The survey found that 40 percent of children start work before the age of 6. It also found the average number of hours worked by children ages 5 to 17 during a 1-week reference period was 32.8 hours. Approximately 13 percent of boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 9 worked from 58 to 74 hours a week. More than two-thirds of all children surveyed were giving either all or part of their earnings to their parents or guardians. Reduced household income from poor crop harvests and school dropouts were two contributing factors for the increased incidence of child labour.” [3a] (p22)

6.149 The Report further stated that:

“Child labourers often were abused. A 1999 study concluded that physical and emotional abuse were twice as common among child workers compared with non-workers, sexual abuse was five times as common, and neglect was eight times as common. Among child workers surveyed, rapes occurred exclusively among child domestic labourers....The Government’s definition of worst forms of child labour included prostitution and bonded labour. During the year, there were reports of forced or bonded labour of children who had been trafficked from the Southern and Oromiya Regions to other regions of the country, to work as domestic servants. Young girls reportedly were forced into prostitution by family members.” [3a] (p22)

6.150 The US State Department’s 2004 Human Rights Report also noted that: “In Addis Ababa’s police stations, there were 10 Child Protection Units, that were staffed by members of an NGO and protected the rights of juvenile delinquents and juvenile victims of crime. Some police officers completed training on procedures for handling cases of child abuse and juvenile delinquency.” [3a] (p17)

6.151 The Report added: “Societal abuse of young girls continued to be a problem. FGM was performed on the majority of girls. Other harmful traditional practices

included uvulectomy, milk teeth extraction, early marriage, marriage by abduction, and food and work prohibitions.” [3a] (p17)

6.152 The OMCT, in its Report on the Rights of the Child in Ethiopia dated 26 June 2003, stated that: “Juveniles aged between 15 and 18 are considered to be fully responsible for their actions and, with the exception of death penalty, face full penal responsibility...juveniles who are 15-18 years old can be subjected to life imprisonment.” [30] (p21)

6.153 The US State Department’s 2004 Human Rights Report noted that: “Child prostitution continued to be a problem and was widely perceived to be growing, and children were trafficked out of the country in adoption schemes.” [3a] (p17)

6.154 The Report further noted that: “There were unconfirmed reports that children from the south were transported into Kenya by child traffickers operating adoption rings, and adopted as other nationalities.” [3a] (p17)

6.155 The same Report noted that:

“According to an NGO report, 60 percent of commercial sex workers were between the ages of 16 and 25. Underage girls worked as hotel workers, barmaids, and prostitutes in resort towns and rural truck stops. Pervasive poverty, migration to urban centres, early marriage, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, and limited educational and job opportunities aggravated the commercial sexual exploitation of children. A few NGOs aided child victims, including the Forum on Street Children Ethiopia, which provided children forced into prostitution or commercial sexual exploitation with shelter, protection, and return to their families.” [3a] (p18)

6.156 The Report also noted that:

“In the Afar region of the east, young girls continued to be married to much older men, but this traditional practice continued to come under greater scrutiny and criticism. Indigenous NGOs, such as the Kembatta Women’s Self Help Center and the Tigray Women’s Association, also affected societal attitudes toward harmful traditional practices and early marriage. Media accounts suggested increasing awareness of the problem. An account in February [2004] from a rural district noted that 74 children in the district had been rescued from marriages at ages as young as 9, through the intervention of the schools and local officials. Pregnancy at an early age often led to obstetric fistulae and permanent incontinence. Treatment was available at only 1 hospital in Addis Ababa that performed more than 1,000 fistula operations a year. It estimated that for every successful operation performed, 10 other young women needed the treatment. The maternal mortality rate was extremely high, partly due to food taboos for pregnant women, poverty, early marriage, and birth complications related to FGM, particularly infibulation.” [3a] (p17)

6.157 The US State Department’s 2002 Human Rights Report notes that:

“The Ministry of Defense did not permit persons under the age of 18 to join the armed forces, and the Government made efforts to enforce this policy. There were no reports that children under the age of 18 were recruited into the military during the year [2002]; however, in the past, military officers admitted that underage applicants sometimes were enlisted. Scarce birth certificates, poor

educational opportunities, patriotism, and pervasive poverty encouraged underage applicants to try to circumvent restrictions on underage soldiers.” [3a] (p25)

CHILDCARE PROVISIONS

6.158 The US State Department’s 2004 Human Rights Report noted that:

“Official government estimates put the number of street children in the country at 150,000 to 200,000, with approximately 50,000 to 60,000 street children in Addis Ababa. UNICEF estimated that there were probably close to 600,000 street children in the country and over 100,000 in Addis Ababa. UNICEF believed the problem was growing worse because of the families’ inability to support children due to parental illness and decreased household income. These children begged, sometimes as part of a gang, or worked in the informal sector. Government and privately run orphanages were unable to handle the number of street children, and older children often abused younger children. Due to severe resource constraints, abandoned infants often were overlooked or neglected at hospitals or orphanages. Children sometimes were maimed or blinded by their handlers to raise their earning from begging.” [3a] (p17-18)

6.159 IRIN news reported on 7 July 2005 that: “Donors are showing worrying signs of ‘compassion fatigue’ in responding to the plight of Ethiopia’s severely malnourished and dying children, the UN Children’s Fund, UNICEF, warned on Wednesday....Bjorn Ljungqvist, UNICEF’s Representative in Ethiopia, said in a statement that major donors were not stepping up fast enough to provide vital funding for a package of life-saving treatments and other interventions.” [14ah]

6.160 The article went on to state: “UNICEF had appealed for about \$54.7 million for Ethiopia’s most vulnerable children during 2005: \$15 million for water and sanitation work, \$39.7 million for health and nutrition. Funding for emergency campaign was still almost US \$42 million, or 76.6 percent short of what was needed....Health and nutrition services, which require everything from antimalaria mosquito nets to measles shots to save lives, had received just over a quarter of the funds they needed.” [14ah]

6.161 IRIN news reported on 23 July 2002 that:

“The rising number of orphans has raised the demand for adoptions to a record high. Some 1,400 children made new homes abroad last year [2004], more than double from the previous year....Adoption agencies also doubled to 30 in the capital Addis Ababa in the last year, a highly lucrative market with some agencies charging parents fees of up to US \$20,000 per child....In a move to help stem the growing orphan crisis in Ethiopia, the US government announced a \$20 million project in December to help the 530,000 HIV/AIDS orphans.... Ethiopia has strict adoption laws, but the process can be pushed through in 10-15 days if the paperwork is in order, according to Balti....An international convention, established in 1993, exists to protect children who are adopted overseas. It has been approved by 66 nations, although the Ethiopian government has not signed it yet.... Most mothers will simply abandon their children near a police station or church rather than turn up at orphanages, where by law, they must be turned away. Any children that turn out to be HIV-positive cannot be put up for adoption.” [14ai]

6.162 IRIN news also reported on 23 July 2002 that:

“Hundreds of street children and homeless people were last month forced out of the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa and dumped in a forest outside the city...Some of the children were reportedly only 11-years-old. The round-up, which has only come to light a month after it happened took place during the World Cup...The homeless and the children were rounded up from the centre of the city where a huge television screen had been erected so that people could watch the football matches.” [14aj]

HOMOSEXUALS

6.163 The US State Department’s 2004 Human Rights Report noted that: “Homosexuality is illegal and punishable by simple imprisonment and in defined aggravated cases for not less than 3 months or more than 5 years. Where children under 13 years of age are involved, imprisonment of 5 to 25 years is provided. While homosexuality was not widely accepted by society, there were no reports of violence against homosexuals.” [3a] (p20)

6.164 Behind the Mask (a website on gay and lesbian affairs in Africa), when accessed August 2005, reported that:

“Sections 600 and 601 prohibit homosexual acts between men and between women, with a penalty of 10 days to 3 years’ ‘simple imprisonment’. This penalty may be increased by 5 or more years when the offender ‘makes a profession of such activities’, or exploits a dependency relation in order to exercise influence over the other person. The maximum sentence of 10 years’ imprisonment can be applied when the offender uses violence, intimidation or coercion, trickery or fraud, or takes unfair advantage of the victim’s inability to offer resistance. The maximum sentence can also be applied when the victim is subjected to acts of cruelty or sadism; when the offender transmits a venereal disease although fully aware of being infected with it; when an adult is charged with committing homosexual acts with persons under 15 years of age; or when distress, shame or despair drives the victim to committing suicide.” [32a]

6.165 The report continued:

“Ethiopia voted against ILGA [International Lesbian and Gay Association] having consultative status at the UN in January and on April 30, 2002. Berhane Meskel Abebe, the Ethiopian representative on the UN Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, said his country voted against ILGA in January because homosexuality is a crime punishable by imprisonment in Ethiopia. ‘It doesn’t go with our society’s belief and general culture and practice.’ he is reported to have said.” [32a]

6.166 On 27 May 2003, Behind the Mask stated: “Local government officials recently called meetings in the various suburbs and villages of Addis Ababa to warn parents about the hazards of homosexuality. Concerned that homosexuality is becoming more visible in the city local authorities are reacting to a recent spate of people coming out as gay or lesbian in the city...[Local officials] also warned that the recent rise in homosexuality is due to parents not looking after their children properly.” [32b]

6.C HUMAN RIGHTS – OTHER ISSUES

USE OF TORTURE

- 6.167 The US State Department's Human Rights Report 2004 documented that: "The Constitution prohibits the use of torture and mistreatment; however, there were numerous credible reports during the year [2004] that security officials often beat or mistreated detainees. Opposition political parties reported frequent and systematic abuse of their supporters by police and government militias." [3a] (p3)
- 6.168 The Report also noted that: "Unlike in the previous year [2003], there were no reports that persons died from torture while in government custody." [3a] (p2)
- 6.169 The Human Rights Watch 2005 Report noted that:
- "Police forces often use excessive force to quell peaceful demonstrations, with demonstrators subject to mass arrest and mistreatment. In January 2004, between 330 and 350 Addis Ababa University students peacefully protesting the arrest of eight other students two days earlier were themselves arrested by Federal Police. While in detention, the students were forced to run and crawl barefoot over sharp gravel for several hours at a time. Police have repeatedly employed similar methods of torture and yet are rarely held accountable for their excesses. Police also responded with force in the early months of 2004 to student demonstrations in secondary schools throughout Oromia. The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) reported that dozens of students were detained, some of whom reported being mistreated while in custody. One student was reportedly shot and killed by police during a student demonstration in Tikur Inchini." [8a] (p1)
- 6.170 Amnesty International, in its 2003 Report, stated that: "Torture of political prisoners, particularly those accused of links with armed opposition groups, continued to be frequently reported. Several women accused of involvement with such groups were reportedly raped. Courts rarely investigated defendants' allegations of torture." [6d] (p3)
- 6.171 The Human Rights Watch Report of 2004 stated that In February 2003, at least 34 Lideta Church members were arrested while at a peaceful meeting. Security forces took them to a police training camp for two days where they were beaten and forced to run barefoot and to crawl on bare knees and elbows on gravel and sand for several hours each day. This form of abuse has been used repeatedly in mass arrests in past years. [8b] (p2)

NGOS IN ETHIOPIA

- 6.172 The US State Department's 2004 Human Rights Report noted that:
- "The Government's relations with international human rights NGOs appeared to improve during the year. Several international human rights groups visited the country during the year, and had unrestricted access to areas needing emergency humanitarian assistance. A senior level Amnesty International delegation visited the country for the first time in 10 years, and the African Union's Special Rapporteur on Prisons visited prisons in various parts of the country. The Government cooperated with international governmental

organizations on human rights issues. Officials of the Federal Security Authority generally were more responsive to requests for information from the diplomatic community....The Government continued to investigate the Human Rights League at year's end for its alleged ties to the OLF. The League's offices remained closed, and the Government still had not responded to its registration request, despite a court order to do so." [3a] (p15)

6.173 The Report also noted that:

"A number of domestic and international human rights groups operated with limited government restriction, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. The Government generally was distrustful and wary of domestic and international human rights groups. Two of the most prominent domestic human rights organizations were EHRCO and the Ethiopian Women's Lawyers Association (EWLA). The Government frequently discounted EHRCO's reports and labeled it a political organization. The EWLA's primary function was to represent women legally. These, and numerous other groups, primarily engaged in civic and human rights education, legal assistance, and trial monitoring. However, the Government neither shared information about nor acknowledged the existence of human rights abuses with members of the domestic NGO community." [3a] (p15)

6.174 Human Rights Watch, in its 2003 Report, observed that:

"Two leading members of EHRCO who had been arrested and bailed in 2001, charged with inciting university students to riot, appeared in court periodically in 2002 but a trial on the merits had not begun at this writing. The Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, which like EHRCO had been temporarily shut down by the government in 2001, faced no overt government interference in 2002. The government continued to refuse to register the Human Rights League." [8c] (p5)

6.175 The US Department of State's 2004 Report further noted that: "The Government continued to investigate the Human Rights League at year's end for its alleged ties to the OLF. The League's offices remained closed, and the Government still had not responded to its registration request, despite a court order to do so." [3a] (p15)

6.176 The same Report noted that:

"The Government permitted independent monitoring of prisons and police stations by the ICRC. Diplomatic missions were also granted access upon providing advance notification to prison officials. In June [2004], the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights paid one of its occasional visits to prisons in various parts of the country. The ICRC generally had access to federal and regional prisons, civilian detention facilities, and police stations throughout the country during the year [2004], and conducted hundreds of visits involving thousands of detainees. The ICRC was allowed to meet regularly with prisoners without third parties being present. The ICRC received government permission to visit military detention facilities where suspected OLF fighters were detained. The ICRC also continued to visit civilian Eritrean nationals and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin detained on national security grounds." [3a] (p5)

- 6.177 Furthermore, the Report noted that: “The Government is required under the Constitution to establish a Human Rights Commission, and an Office of the Ombudsman with the authority to receive and investigate complaints with respect to misadministration by executive branch offices. In August [2004], the Government named Kassa Gebre Haiwot as Human Rights Commissioner and Abay Tekele as Ombudsman. Neither entity was fully operational by year’s end [2004].” [3a] (p15)

REFUGEES IN ETHIOPIA

- 6.178 The US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants’ 2005 Report on Ethiopia noted that:

“The Refugee Proclamation, enacted in July, established the right to asylum and incorporated the provisions of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951 Convention) and the 1969 African Refugee Convention. The Refugee Proclamation prohibited the Government from refusing entry to refugees or asylum seekers or expelling or returning them to any country where they would be at risk of persecution or harm. Many Somalis applied for legal resident status rather than recognition as refugees. The Government granted most of these applications.” [24]

- 6.179 The Report further noted: “UNHCR closed the largest Somali refugee camp, Hartishek, as the last 719 occupants returned to Somaliland and aid agencies used the camp for IDPs. Some 2,000 Somali refugees also repatriated from Aisha camp.” [24]

- 6.180 The US Department of State’s 2004 Report on Human Rights noted that:

“The law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status in accordance with the 1951 U.N. Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol, and the Government has established a system for providing such protection. Parliament passed a national refugee law during the year, but the law has not yet been published in the national gazette and thus has not yet taken effect. In practice, the Government generally provided for protection against refoulement, the return of persons to a country where they feared persecution, and granted refugee status or asylum. The Government generally cooperated with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organizations in assisting refugees and returning citizens.” [3a] (p13)

- 6.181 The Report also noted that:

“As of September [2004], the country hosted approximately 121,000 refugees, down from 128,610 refugees at the end of 2003. Of these, some 89,000 Sudanese refugees were located in 5 refugee camps in the west. As the result of the ongoing repatriation program in the eastern camps, the number of Somali refugees decreased to about 23,000 at 2 camps, Aysha and Kebribeyah. The Hartishek camp closed in July [2004]. The Government, in cooperation with the UNHCR, continued to provide temporary protection to refugees from Sudan and Somalia.” [3a] (p13)

- 6.182 The Report additionally noted that:

“Approximately 24,500 Nuer and Dinka refugees remained in Fugnido camp in Gambella Region at year’s end 2004]. Plans to move all Nuer and Dinka refugees from Fugnido camp were delayed indefinitely after unknown assailants, allegedly local ethnic Anuaks, attacked a vehicle carrying local government refugee officials, and killed eight persons in December 2003; the officials were enroute to the proposed new camp site in the Odier-Bol area....In May, Eritrean refugees were moved from the Wa’ala Nhibi temporary camp to a new permanent refugee camp further from the border. The new camp, Shimelba, holds approximately 8,200 Eritrean refugees, approximately 4,200 of whom were ethnic Eritrean Kunamas. The Shimelba camp had only marginal health, education, water, and sanitation facilities.” [3a] (p13)

- 6.183 Amnesty International, in its 2003 Report, stated that: “Ethnic clashes among Sudanese refugees in Fugnido camp in Gambela region in November [2002] left over 40 dead and scores wounded.” [6d] (p1)
- 6.184 The US Department of State’s 2003 Report on Human Rights noted that: “Unlike in the previous year, there were no reports that government security forces tortured refugees or that the Government’s refugee agency beat refugees. By year’s end [2003], it was unclear whether the Government’s refugee agency had conducted investigations into such abuses from previous years.” [3b] (p5)

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE (IDPs)

- 6.185 The US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants’ 2005 Report on Ethiopia noted that:

“In the Gambella region, violent conflict between ethnic Nuer and Anyuak resulted in the deaths of over 500 Anyuaks. A parliamentary commission found soldiers responsible for 13 Anyuak deaths. The Government announced in March 2005 that it would prosecute six of them. Despite periodic calm, both Nuer and Anyuak groups continued to fight, displacing tens of thousands, including about 5,000 Anyuaks who fled to Sudan.” [24]

- 6.186 The Report added: “At year’s end, there were about 132,000 IDPs. In the Tigray region, about 62,000 were displaced during the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict, and in Gambella, the recent violence displaced 51,000. In the east, IDPs lived with relatives, either in camps or ethnically similar communities.” [24]
- 6.187 The Report further added: “About 15,000 people lived in the two main IDP camps in Fafen and Hartishek, where nearly half the residents did not receive water for three months. By April 2005, five percent of children under five at Hartishek were acutely malnourished and were dying at a rate of nearly 5 per 10,000 every day—more than twice the emergency mortality rate.” [24]
- 6.188 *The Guardian* newspaper reported on 3 March 2004 that:

“Ethiopia has begun a resettlement programme which aims to move up to a million people away from the country’s drought-stricken and over-worked central highlands to more fertile regions. Tens of thousands of families are to be moved before the rains come in May as the result of a pilot project last year, which the government says resulted in improved harvests. Critics say the lands available for resettlement – mainly along Ethiopia’s border with Sudan – are in

areas notorious for diseases including malaria and kala azar or visceral leishmaniasis, a potentially fatal disease transmitted by sandflies...Over the next three years the government aims to relocate more than 2 million people, including the million who are being moved in the coming months.” [35]

6.189 IRIN news reported on 14 July 2004:

“Tens of thousands of people remain displaced following violent clashes in western Ethiopia’s Gambela State, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) said on Wednesday. In a newly launched profile on internal displacement in Ethiopia, it said 51,000 people had not returned to their homes....The NRC said power struggles and ethnic violence had plagued Gambela, which borders Sudan and is 800 km southwest of the capital, Addis Ababa, since 2003, forcing many people to flee their homes. Its findings also come as an independent inquiry into the violence in Gambela revealed that some ‘unidentified’ troops from the defence ministry had murdered 13 people”. [14ak]

6.190 Médecins sans Frontières reported on 1 December 2003 that: “Over the next three-year period the Ethiopian government intends to resettle 2.2 million people in an attempt to address food insecurity in the country by providing settlers with available land. Despite preparations made by the authorities in Abrihigira, the health situation in the region has deteriorated and resulted in very high mortality and malnutrition rates.” [21d]

6.191 Médecins sans Frontières further noted:

“The lack of year round access to the area, especially in the rainy season, has exacerbated an already dire situation. Poor access to drinking water due to water pumps breaking down and not being fixed has forced the population to rely on river water, resulting in high rates of diarrhea. The inaccessibility of the area has caused ruptures in the drug supply, no monitoring and reporting of morbidity or mortality data, and a total inability of the health services to refer and treat emergency cases.” [21d]

Annex A: Chronology of events

- 1930s** Emperor Haile Selassie wrests power from old aristocracy and establishes modern autocracy. [1a] (p424)
- 1935** Italy invades Ethiopia. [1a] (p424)
- 1941** Allied forces end Italian occupation. [1a] (p424)
- 1952** Former Italian colony of Eritrea, which had become a UN mandated territory after World War II, federated with Ethiopia. [1a] (p424)
- 1962** Eritrea formally annexed by Ethiopia. [1a] (p424)
- 1970s** Increased Eritrean resistance to Ethiopian control by ELF and EPLF. [1a] (p424-425)
- 1974** **September:** Calls for democratisation, army mutinies, Eritrean resistance, economic problems and famine culminate in overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in a military coup. Haile Selassie dies in military custody in 1975. The Dergue takes control of Ethiopia and establishes Provisional Military Government (PMG) under Lt-Gen Aman Andom. [1a] (p425)
November: Gen Aman assassinated. Fifty seven former civil and military officials, including two former Prime Ministers executed without trial. Brig-Gen Teferi Benti, Chairman of the Dergue, becomes Head of State. Major (later Lt-Col) Mengistu Haile Mariam one of two Vice-Chairman of the Dergue. [1a] (p425)
December: Dergue declares Ethiopia a socialist state. PMG replaced by Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC). [1a] (p425)
- 1975** Col Mengistu emerges as most influential member of the Dergue. PMAC embarks upon “Ethiopia Tikdem” (Ethiopia First) reforms – nationalisation of land, financial institutions and large firms, literacy drive and establishment of peasant co-operatives. Power struggles within Dergue, continuing into 1976, between supporters of MEISON and EPRP. Joint ELF/EPLF attack almost captures Eritrean capital Asmara. Severe retaliation taken against Eritrea. Tigrean support for Eritrea grows. TPLF formed. [1a] (p425) [1c] (p1566)
- 1977-1978** TPLF grows stronger with EPLF support, defeating EPRP opponents in Tigre. [1a] (p425), [1c] (p1566)
- Mid-1977:** ‘Red Terror’ campaign turns on MEISON. EPRP and MEISON neutralised by end of 1978. Ethiopia under Mengistu moves increasingly closer to Soviet Union. [1a] (p425)
- 1977** **February:** Col Mengistu assumes control as Head of State and Chairman of PMAC. Gen Teferi Benti and five other Dergue members executed. ‘Red Terror’ campaign launched against Mengistu’s political and armed opponents, particularly the EPRP. Tens of thousands killed or tortured. [1a] (p425)
June: Somalia invades Ethiopia’s Ogaden region. [1a] (p425)

- 1978** **February:** Ethiopia counter-attacks with large-scale Soviet and Cuban support; Somalia withdraws in early 1978. [1a] (p425)
June: Large Ethiopian offensive launched in Eritrea; most towns recaptured and EPLF retreats to Nakfa. [1c] (p1566)
- 1979** Mengistu sets up Committee for Organising the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE); all other political groups abolished. [1a] (p425)
- 1981** Civil war in Eritrea between ELF and EPLF. [1a] (p425)
- 1982** EPLF, with TPLF allies from Tigre, force ELF into exile in Sudan. [1a] (p425)
- 1985-6** Military successes against TPLF. [1c] (p1566)
- 1989** **September:** TPLF establishes EPRDF as united front with Amhara-based EPDM. Unsuccessful peace negotiations between Government and EPLF. [1a] (p426)
November: EPRDF forces close in on Addis Ababa. [1a] (p426)
- 1990** EPLF captures Masawa. Peace talks between Government and EPLF broken off. [1c] (p1566)
Peace talks between Government and TPLF collapse. Socialism effectively abandoned by Mengistu Government; WPE becomes the EDUP and open to non-Marxists. Moves towards market economy begin, but economy close to collapse. [1c] (p1566)
- 1991-2:** Relations between EPRDF and OLF deteriorate; clashes between rival EPRDF and OLF supporters in Oromo region. US and EPLF broker cease-fire between EPRDF and OLF supporters in April 1992. [1c] (p1567)
- 1991** **January:** EPRDF announces moderate, non-Marxist programme, which wins United States support. [1a] (p426)
21 May: Mengistu flees Ethiopia and goes into exile in Zimbabwe; Vice-President Lt-Gen Tesfaye Gebre Kidan assumes control of Government. [1a] (p426) [1c] (p1566)
28 May: EPRDF forces enter Addis Ababa, with public support of United States; EPRDF establishes interim Government. At the same time EPLF establishes provisional administration in Eritrea, effectively seceding from Ethiopia. [1c] (p1566)
July: National conference attended by 20 political groups establishes Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE); TPLF leader and EPRDF Chairman Meles Zenawi becomes President, with Tamirat Layne Prime Minister. Thirty two political groups represented on Council of Representatives, including the OLF, which also holds four Ministerial positions on Council of Ministers. [1a] (p426)
November: 14 new autonomous administrative regions established, broadly reflecting ethnic boundaries. [1c] (p1567)
- 1992** **June:** OLF and other groups boycott regional elections. EPRDF and allies win over 90 per cent of votes cast. OLF withdraws from TGE and goes into armed opposition. OLF forces capture Asbe Teferi but government forces retake the town. [1c] (p1567)

- 1993** **April:** Referendum in Eritrea approves independence from Ethiopia. [1c] (p1567)
24 May: Eritrea achieves formal independence, with recognition from Ethiopia. [1c] (p1567)
- 1994** **June:** EPRDF wins large majority of seats in elections to new Constituent Assembly. Polls boycotted by OLF, AAPO and CAFPDE. [1c] (p1567)
October: Constituent Assembly inaugurated. [1c] (p1567)
December: Constituent Assembly approves new Constitution, establishing federal system of government with nine ethnically-based national states and the federal capital territory. Constituent Assembly replaced by bicameral Federal Parliamentary Assembly (FPA), made up of the Council of People's Representatives (CPR) and the Council of the Federation. [1a] (p427)
December: Trial of Dergue officials begins, including Mengistu. Trials held by SPO, created in 1992 to investigate and try cases of human rights abuses committed under the Mengistu administration. [1c] (p1567) [1c] (p10)
- 1995** **May:** Elections to the CPR and national state assemblies, boycotted by most opposition parties, produce landslide win for EPRDF and allies. Elections deemed to be neither free nor fair by international observers. [1a] (p427)
21 August: Legislative power transferred to new Federal Parliamentary Assembly. [1c] (p1567)
22 August: TGE wound up as new Constitution becomes effective. Country renamed the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). Dr Negasso Gidada, an ethnic Oromo, elected first President of FDRE by FPA. [1c] (p1567)
23 August: Meles Zenawi, President under TGE, elected first Prime Minister of FDRE by CPR. [1c] (p1567)
- 1996** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Tamirat Layne removed from office on suspicion of corruption. [1a] (p430)
- 1998** **May:** Border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea leads to armed clashes along the border, centred on the Badme area. [1a] (p341)
June: Eritrea aircraft bomb Mekele in northern Ethiopia, killing 44. Ethiopia launches air attacks on Asmara airport in Eritrea. [1a] (p431)
June: Ethiopia and Eritrea accept a US-brokered agreement to halt air-strikes against each other. [1c] (p1569)
- 1999** **February:** Resumption of heavy fighting in border dispute with Eritrea. [1a] (p431)
- 2000** **May:** Ethiopia launches all-out offensive against Eritrea to recapture land occupied by Eritrea since May 1998; Ethiopia recaptures all occupied land by end May 2000. [1c] (p1570)
May: Ruling EPRDF coalition wins national elections but loses ground to opposition parties and independents in some regional elections. [1a] (p428)
June: Ethiopia and Eritrea sign ceasefire agreement; Eritrea agrees to UN border monitoring force within its territory. [1a] (p431)
12 December: Ethiopia and Eritrea sign peace agreement ending border war, which establishes commissions to mark the border exchange prisoners, to return displaced people and to hear compensation claims. [1c] (p1570)

- 2001** **22 February:** Ethiopia announces it has completed its troop withdrawal from Eritrea in accordance with a United Nations-sponsored agreement to end the border war. [1c] (p1570)
March: Meles Zenawi says he has thwarted an attempt to cause political upheaval by a dissident group in the dominant Tigre People's Liberation Front. [1c] (p1568)
April: Thousands of demonstrators clash with police in Addis Ababa in protest against police brutality and in support of calls for political and academic freedom. [1c] (p1568)
May: Intelligence and security chief Kifle Gebre-Medhin – a key ally of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi – assassinated as he entered an armed forces officers' club in Addis Ababa. [1c] (p1568)
June: Dr Negaso Gidada is expelled from the ruling coalition EPRDF. He continues to serve as Head of State until October 2001. [1c] (p1568) [1a] (p413)
August: Almaz Meko, Speaker of the House of Federation and prominent member of the OPDO, states that she was applying for asylum in the United States. She felt the Oromo people were not being democratically represented by the OPDO and as a result said she would join the OLF. [1a] (p413)
- 2002** **March:** In Tepi, members of two minority ethnic groups, the Sheko and Majenger, clash with local officials and police over political rights. In the following days, more than one hundred were killed and villages razed on the order of local authorities, leaving some 5,800 homeless. Nearly one thousand civilians were arrested after the disturbance. [1a] (p429) [1c] (p1568)
April: The International Tribunal announces the border decision. Both governments declare victory. Confusion over which country controls Badme remains. [1a] (p432)
May: In the city of Awassa, soldiers using machine-guns mounted on armoured cars shoot into a crowd of farmers protesting a change in the administrative status of the city. [1c] (p1568)
June: Police arrest several hundred students, teachers, and others whom it accuses of being supporters of OLF. The Government claims the OLF had instigated the student protests. [8c] (p2)
August: After international pressure, 90 state employees are arrested by the authorities for their role in the March riots. [1c] (p1568)
Late August: Eritrea repatriates 279 Ethiopian prisoners of war. [8c] (p4)
November: Ethnic clashes among Sudanese refugees in Fugnido camp in Gambela region leave over 40 dead and scores wounded. [6d] (p1)
29 November: One thousand, one hundred and thirty POWs and 95 civilian internees of Eritrean origin are released by the Ethiopian authorities and repatriated. [13c] (p1)
- 2003** **March:** The Boundary Commission categorically rules Badme to be in Eritrean territory. Ethiopia voices its opposition to the ruling. [1a] (p415) [1c] (p1570)
December: There were a spate of killings in the Gambella region. [14a]
- 2004** **January:** There were mass arrests and physical abuse of hundreds of university students in the capital, Addis Ababa. [14x] Several Oromo students protested to Oromia regional state officials about the recent federal government decision to transfer the regional state capital from Addis Ababa to Adama. [6i]
January: The Justice Ministry bans the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association (EFJA). [14am]
February: Government lifts ban on journalists' association. [14an]

February: More clashes break out in Gambella region in Dima refugee camp. [14ao]

March: Ethiopia's massive US \$220 million resettlement drive has been criticised as 'complex, costly and wasteful'. [14ap]

March: Survey finds that two million lives are threatened by landmines in Ethiopia. [14aq]

April: Ethiopia launches National HIV/AIDS forum. [14ar]

April: World Bank announces US \$3.3 billion dept relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. [14as]

June: At least 2000 Somali refugees repatriated from Ethiopia. [14at]

June: Major relief effort gets under way to avert potential crises from affecting the Government's controversial resettlement scheme. [14au]

June: Centre for helping victims of trafficking opens in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. [14av]

October: The Paris Club of rich lending nations agrees to cancel \$758m of Ethiopian dept to help end poverty and promote growth in the country. [4y]

October: Three Ethiopian men sentenced to death in Ethiopia after being found guilty of murder of more than 200 people over a decade ago. [4r]

November: Ethiopia accepts "in principle" a long-disputed ruling on its border with Eritrea but still thinks it is illegal and unjust. [4z]

December: Plan launched to help orphans. [14aw]

2005 February: Dispute grows between Ethiopia and Egypt over access to the waters of the Nile. [4aa]

March: Italy to return first piece of historic obelisk from Rome to its home in Axum. [4ab]

April: Ethiopian army clashes with rebels from the Ogaden National Liberation Front crossed over the border from Somalia. [4ac]

May: Prime Minister Meles Zamawi accuses opposition parties of fomenting ethnic hatred ahead of May general elections. [4d]

15 May: Ethiopia holds general elections. [4e]

May: Ethiopia's national election board investigates allegations of fraud in 15 May general elections. [4ad]

May: Oromo students start to return to Ethiopia after fleeing to Kenya complaining of persecution. [4ae]

June: Over 3000 people arrested in Ethiopia since the disputed elections in May. [4g]

June: UK suspends £20 million aid after 36 people were reported killed in May 2005 election protests. [4af]

June: Authorities release nearly 2,700 people who were detained after May 2005 election protests. [4i]

July: Prime Minister Meles Zenawi meets with opposition leaders for the first time since the May 2005 disputed polls. [4ag]

August: Votes counted in partial re-run of May 2005 disputed general election. [4ah]

Annex B: Results of the General Election held on 15 May 2005

Party	Seats
Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)	327
Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD)	109
The United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF)	52
Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM)	11
Benishangul Gumuz People's Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF)	8
Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP)	8
Gambela People's Democratic Movement (GPDM)	3
Sheko and Mezenger People's Democratic United Organization (SMPDUO)	1
Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP)	23
Hareri National League (HNL)	1
Argoba Nationality Democratic Organization (ANDO)	1
Independent	1
Total out of 547 seats [17a]	545

Annex C: List of registered political parties

Full name	Abbreviation
All Amhara People's Organization.....	AAPO
All Ethiopian Democratic Party.....	AEDP
All Ethiopia Unity Party	AEUP
Afar Liberation Front Party	ALFP
Amhara National Democratic Movement.....	ANDM
Argoba Nationality Democratic Organization.....	ANDO
Afar National Democratic Party	ANDP
Argoba People's Democratic Movement	APDM
Agew Peoples' Democratic Movement.....	APDM
Agnewaha People's Democratic Organization	APDO
Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front	ARDUF
Benishangul-Gumuz Peoples' Democratic Unity Front.....	BGPDUF
Baherwork Mesmes Nationality Democratic Unity Organization.....	BMNDUO
Baher Work Mesmes People's Democratic Organization	BWMPDO
Coalition for Unity and Democracy.....	CUD
Denta, Debamo, Kitchenchala Democratic Organization.....	DDKDO
Dube and Degene Nationality Democratic Party	DDNDP
Donga People's Democratic Organization.....	DPDO
Dil Wabi People's Democratic Movement	DWPDM
Ethiopian Berta People's Democratic Organization	EBPDO
Ethiopian Democratic League	EDL
Ethiopian Democratic Unity.....	EDU
Ethiopian National Democratic Party.....	ENDP
Ethiopian National Unity Party	ENUP
Ethiopia Pan Africanist party	EPAFP
Endegagene People's Democratic Movement	EPDM
Ethiopian Peace and Democratic Party.....	EPDP
Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front.....	EPRDF
Ethiopian Social Democratic Federal Party	ESDFP
Ethiopians' Unity Democratic Organization	EUDO
Gamo Democratic Union.....	GDU
Gamo-Gofa People's Democracy Unity	G-GPDU
Gurage People's Democratic Front	GPDF
Gambela People's Democratic Movement	GPDM
Gedeo People's Democratic Organization	GPDO
Geda System Advancement Party	GSAP
Hadiya Nation Democratic Organization	HNDO
Hareri National League	HNL
Harari People Democratic Party.....	HPDP
Independent.....	Independent
The Joint Political Forum	JPF
Kembata People's Congress.....	KPC
Konso People's Democratic Union.....	KPDU
The Mixed Nations, Nationality One Ethiopia Democratic Party	MNNOEDP
Mezenger People's Democratic Organization	MPDO
Nuwer People's Democratic Organization.....	NPDO
Oromo Abbo Liberation Front.....	OALF
Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement.....	OFDM
Oromia Liberation National Party	OLNP
Oromo Liberation Unity Front.....	OLUF

Oromo National Congress	ONC
Oida Nationality Democratic Organization.....	ONDO
Oromo People's Democratic Organization	OPDO
Omo People's Democratic Union	OPDU
Rainbow Ethiopia: Movement for Democracy and Social Justice	REMDSJ
Somali Democratic Alliance Forces.....	SDAF
Southern Ethiopia People's Coalition	SEPC
Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Movement	SEPDM
Sodo Gordenia People's Democratic Organization	SGPDO
Sidama Hadicho People's Democratic Organization	SHPDO
Sidama Liberation Movement	SLM
Sheko and Mezenger People's Democratic Unity Organization	SMPDUO
Selte Nationality Democratic Movement.....	SNDM
Somali People's Democratic Party	SPDP
Selti People's Democratic Unity Party.....	SPDUP
Somali People's Liberation Front Party	SPLFP
Tembaro People's Democratic Unity	TPDU
Tigrayan People's Liberation Front	TPLF
Tigri Worgi Nationality Democratic Unity Party	TWNDUP
United Ethiopian Democratic Force.....	UEDF
UEDP-MEDHIN	UEDP-MEDHIN
Unity of Southern Ethiopia Democratic Forces.....	USEDf
Wolayata Deria Yemeya	WDY
Wolayata People's Democratic Front	WPDF
Western Somali Democratic Party	WSDP
Yem Nationality Democratic Movement	YNDM
Zai People's Democratic Organization	ZPDO
Zeisei Peoples's Democratic Organization.....	ZPDO

[17b]

Annex D: Political Organisations

All-Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP)

New name for the All-Amhara People's Organization (AAPO). **See AAPO**. President Hailu Shawol. Member of JADE. (see JADE) [1a] (p444)

Afar People's Democratic Organization (APDO)

Formerly the Afar Liberation Front (ALF); based in former Hararge and Wollo administrative Regions. Leader Ismail Ali Sirro. [1a] (p444)

Al-Ittihad al-Islamia (Islamic Union Party)

Somalia-based armed opposition group seeking self-determination for the Somali-populated Ogaden district. [1a] (p427)

All-Amhara People's Organization (AAPO)

Ethnic-based. In August 2002 the AAPO changed its name to the All-Ethiopian Unity Party (AEUP). [1a] (p444) [28] (p168)

All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement (MEISON)

See COEDF. [1a] (p444)

Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM)

Based in Tigray; represents interests of the Amahra people; formerly the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM); adopted present name in 1994; Secretary-General Tefera Walwa. [1a] (p444)

Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia (CAFPDE)

Formed 1993, broad based coalition of groups opposed to the EPRDF. Chair Dr Beyene Petros (also Chair of SEPDC). [1a] (p444) [28] (p168)

Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces (COEDF)

Formed 1991 in USA by the EPRP with a faction of the EDU and MEISON; opposed to the EPRDF. Chair Mersha Yoseph. [1a] (p444)

Coalition of Ethiopian Opposition Political Organizations (CEOPO)

Formed in 1998 in France as a coalition of groups opposing the EPRDF. Chair Negede Gobezie, Chair (Ethiopia) Kifleh Tigneh Abate. [1a] (p444)

Commission for Organising the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE)

Set up by Mengistu in 1979; precursor of the WPE. [1a] (p425)

Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)

Fought in alliance with TPLF/EPRDF against Mengistu Government; formed provisional administration of Eritrea May 1991 and Government of independent Eritrea May 1993. [1a] (p425-426)

Ethiopian Democratic Organization

See ENDP. [1a] (p444)

Ethiopian Democratic Organization Coalition

See ENDP. [1a] (p444)

Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP)

Formed in 1998; Secretary General Lidetu Ayalew. Joined **EDUP** in July 2003 to create **UEDP**. [1a] [p444] [28] (p169)

Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU)

See **COEDF**. [1a] (p444)

Ethiopian Democratic Unity Party (EDUP)

Replaced the WPE in March 1990 and abandoned the WPE's reliance on Marxist-Leninist doctrine; the sole legal party until May 1991. Leader Ras Mengesha, Secretary-General Lt-Gen Tesfaye Gebre Kidan. Joined EDP in July 2003 to create **UEDP**. [1a] (p444) [1b] (p426)

Ethiopian National Congress (ENC)

US based organisation; aims to form a unified opposition among anti-government parties. Chair Gebeyehu Ijugu. [1a] (p444)

Ethiopian National Democratic Party (ENDP)

Formed 1994 by the merger of five pro-government organisations with members in the Council of Representatives: the Ethiopian Democratic Organization, the Ethiopian Democratic Organization Coalition, the Gurage People's Democratic Front, the Kembata People's Congress and the Wolaita People's Democratic Front. Chair Fekadu Gedamu. [1a] (p444)

Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM)

See **ANDM**. [1a] (p444)

Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)

Formed 1989 by the TPLF as an alliance of insurgent groups. Ousted Mengistu Government May 1991 in alliance with EPLF. Dominant party in the TGE from July 1991 onwards. Present governing party of the FDRE. Leader Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. The EPRDF comprises the TPLF, the ANDM and the OPDO. [1a] (p444 & 426)

Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP)

See **COEDF**. [1a] (p444)

Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL)

Formed 1994 by the merger of 11 Ethiopian Somali organizations. Merged with other Somali groups June 1998 to form the Somali Democratic Party (SDP) – see **SPDP**. [1a] (p444)

Gambela People's Democratic Front (GPDF)

Pro-government group based in the Gambela region. Chair Akilo Nigilio. [1a] (p444)

Gurage People's Democratic Front

See **ENDP**. [1a] (p444)

Hadiya National Democratic Organization (HNDO)

Founded in 1991, a regionally-based party with wider alliances. Won five seats in the federal House of People's Representatives in 2000. Leader Beyene Petros. [28] (p169)

Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia

Leader Abdelkarim Inrahim Hamid. (see **UOLF**). [1a] (p444)

Islamic Unity Party

See **al-Ittihad al-Islamia**. [1a] (p427)

Joint Action for Democracy in Ethiopia (JADE)

Founded in 2003 by the CAFPDE, the AEUP and the ONC as a common forum to enable them to co-ordinate their opposition to the EPRDF. [1a] (p444)

Kembata People's Congress

See **ENDP**. [1a] (p444)

MEISON

See **COEDF**. [1a] (p444)

Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF)

A party based in Somali state. The OLF and the ONLF signed a military co-operation agreement in July 1996. They demand greater autonomy. The ONLF received support from another Somali organisation, the Islamic Union Party (al-Ittihad al-Islam), which has been fighting for an Islamic state in Somalia. [1a] (p427)

Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)

Clashes between members of the OLF and members of the OPDO (an EPRDF member-party) during the run-up to elections led to a final break with the EPRDF in 1992, after which the OLF went into armed opposition. In alliance with armed wing of the ONLF from July 1996. They advocate self-determination for the Oromo People and the use of Oromo language and culture. Member of UOLF. Chairman Daoud Ibsa Gudina. [28] (p169) [1a] (p425)

Oromo National Congress (ONC)

Founded in 1996. Exists to oppose the OPDO through legitimate electoral channels. Member of JADE (see **JADE**). President Merera Gudina. [28] (p169) [1a] (p444)

Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO)

Formed 1990 by the TPLF to campaign in Oromo areas; opposed to the OLF. Part of the EPRDF alliance. Leader Abedula Gemed. [1a] (p444)

Oromo People's Liberation Front (OPLF)

See **UOLF**. [1a] (p444)

Somali Abo Liberation Front (SALF)

Operates in the Bale district of the Somali National State; received military assistance from Somalia. Secretary-General Masurad Shu'abi Ibrahim. [1a] (p444)

Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP)

Formed in 1998 by merger of Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL). Operates in former Bale Administrative Region; has received Somali military assistance. Secretary-General Shu'abi Ibrahim. [1a] (p444)

Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Coalition (SEPDC)

Opposition alliance; Chair Dr Beyene Petros. [1a] (p444)

Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Union (SEPDU)

Alliance formed 1992 by ten ethnically-based political groups in southern Ethiopia;

represented in the Council of Representatives, although five of the ten groups were expelled from the Council in April 1993. [1a] (p444)

Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)

Formed 1975. Dominant group within the EPRDF, formed in 1989. Chair Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Vice Chair Seyoum Mesfin. [1a] (p444) [28] (p170)

United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF)

Formed August 2003 as a coalition of 15 opposition parties to challenge the current Government in the 2005 elections. Chair Dr Beyene Petros. [14g]

United Ethiopian Democratic Party (UEDP)

Formed in July 2003 and is made up of the EDP and the EDUP. Head is Dr Admasu Gebeyehu. [1a] (p444)

United Oromo Liberation Forces (UOLF)

Formed in 2000 in Asmara, Eritrea as a common Oromo Front seeking to overthrow the Ethiopian Government. Alliance comprises of Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia, Oromo Liberation Council (OLC), Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Oromo People's Liberation Front (OPLF), Oromo's People's Liberation Organization (UPLO) and United Oromo People's Liberation Front (UOPLF). Chair Waqo Cutu; Secretary General Galasa Dilbo. [1a] (p444)

Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF)

Formed in 1975. Aims to unite the Ogaden region with Somalia. Maintains guerilla forces of c.3,000 men. Has received support from regular Somali forces. Secretary-General Issa Shaykh Abdi Nasir Adan. [1a] (p444)

Wolaita People's Democratic Front

See ENDP. [1a] (p444)

Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE)

Formed 1984 by Mengistu; renamed the EDUP in March 1990; the sole legal party until May 1991. [1a] (p425), [1b] (p426)

Annex E: Prominent People*

Abadula Gemada

Minister of Defence and Chairman of the OPDO. [1a] (p430, 443-444)

Adisu Legeso

Deputy Prime Minister and Rural Development Minister. [1a] (p443)

Dr **Admasu** Gebeyehu

Head of the UEDP. [1a] (p444)

Ismail **Ali** Sirro

Leader of the APDO. [1a] (p444)

Lt-Gen **Aman** Andom

Head of State and Chairman of the Dergue September 1974; assassinated November 1974. [1a] (p425)

Dr **Beyene** Petros

Chairman of CAFPDE and the SEPDC; President of the Hadiya National Democratic Organization (HNDO). Dr Beyene is a Member of the Ethiopian Parliament and a Professor at Addis Ababa University. Head of Coalition UEDF for six months from August 2003. [1a] (p444) [28] (p169)

Daoud Ibsa Gudina

Chairman of the OLF. [28] (p169)

Fekadu Gedamu

Chairman of the ENDP. [1a] (p444)

Girma Wolde Giorgis

Current Ethiopian President; ethnic Oromo. [1a] (p430 & 443)

Hailu Shawel

President of AAPO, now AEUP. [1a] (p444)

Meles Zenawi

TPLF leader and Chairman of the EPRDF; President of Ethiopia July 1991-August 1995; Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia August 1995 to the present. [1a] (p443 & 444)

Emperor **Menelik**

Modernising and unifying ruler in late nineteenth century; died 1913. Founded Addis Ababa in the late 1880s, defeated the Italians in 1896. [1a] (p424)

Lt-Col **Mengistu** Haile Mariam (Col **Mengistu**)

Assumed power February 1977; Secretary-General of the WPE from 1984; President of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia from 1977 until he fled in May 1991; lives in exile in Zimbabwe. [1c] (p1566)

Merera Gudina

President of ONC. [1a] (p444)

Mersha Yoseph
Chairman of COEDF. [1a] (p444)

Mohamoud Dirir Gheddi
Chair of the SPDP. [1a] (p444)

Dr **Negasso** Gidada
President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia from 1995 until October 2001; ethnic Oromo. [14aa]

Emperor **Haile Selassie**
Regent 1916; King 1928; Emperor from 1930 until deposed in 1974; died in military custody 1975. [1c] (p1566)

Tamirat Layne
Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia in 1991; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence in 1996. Dismissed and detained in 1996 and tried on corruption charges. Sentenced to 18 years imprisonment in 2000. [1b] (p410 & 413)

Dr **Taye** Woldesemayat
Secretary-General of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association; arrested June 1996 and held in detention until his release in May 2002. [1a] (p428) [1c] (p1567)

Tefera Walwa
Secretary-General of the EPRDF-allied ANDM. [1a] (p444)

Brig-Gen **Teferi** Benti
Replaced General Aman as Chairman of the Dergue and Head of State 1974; executed by Mengistu February 1977. [1a] (p425) [1c] (p1566)

Lt-Gen **Tesfaye** Gebre Kidan
Vice-President under Mengistu who briefly assumed control of the country after Mengistu fled Ethiopia in May 1991; Secretary-General of the EDUP. [1a] (p426) [1c] (p1566)

* It is more usual for people in Ethiopia and Eritrea to be addressed by the first name. This is reflected in this list and at times in the text of this Report.

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