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Ethiopia: Deteriorating human rights situation

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From

Geneva

We are very concerned by the deteriorating human rights situation in some regions of Ethiopia.

In Amhara region, following a flare-up in clashes between the Ethiopian military and the regional Fano militia, and the declaration of a state of emergency on 4 August, the situation worsened considerably. At least 183 people have been killed in clashes since July, according to information gathered by the UN Human Rights Office.

ecoi.net description:

Amhara region: At least 183 people killed in fighting

The wide-ranging state of emergency gives the authorities broad powers nationwide, to arrest suspects without a court order, impose curfews and ban public gatherings.

We have received reports that more than 1,000 people have been arrested across Ethiopia under this law. Many of those detained were reported to be young people of Amhara ethnic origin suspected of being Fano supporters. Since early August, mass house-to-house searches have reportedly been taking place, and at least three Ethiopian journalists covering the situation in the Amhara region have been detained. Detainees have reportedly been placed in improvised detention centres that lack basic amenities.

We call on the authorities to stop mass arrests, ensure that any deprivation of liberty is judicially reviewed, and release those arbitrarily detained. Authorities must ensure that conditions of detention comply with international norms and standards. We call on them to allow oversight bodies – including the UN Human Rights Office and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission – regular and unconditional access to all places of detention. The safety of detainees needs to be guaranteed and they must be afforded full protection of their human rights, including fair trial and procedural guarantees.

With federal forces reasserting their presence in certain towns and Fano militias reportedly retreating into rural areas, we call on all actors to stop killings, other violations and abuses. Grievances must be addressed through dialogue and political process.

We have also received allegations that at least 250 ethnic Tigrayans were detained in the disputed area of Western Tigray, reportedly in joint operations by the Amhara police, local authorities and local militia, including armed youth from Wolkait. Those detained were then reportedly taken by armed Wolkait youth to an area controlled by the Tigray Interim Regional Administration, where they were intercepted by the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF). The ENDF then reportedly screened and gave those detained the option of either returning to Western Tigray or remaining in the Tigray Interim Regional Administration area.

Amid continued allegations of human rights violations and abuses, the situation in Oromia is also of concern.

between Ethiopian military and Fano militias since July 2023; more than 1,000 persons have been arrested under the state of emergency law

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Ethiopia

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All human rights violations and abuses in the various regions of Ethiopia must be promptly, impartially and effectively investigated, and those responsible must be held to account.

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