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DEPORTEES SUBJECTED TO INTENSE INTERROGATION

SOCEPP had reported earlier on the plight of 15 Ethiopian refugees deported from the Sudan and handed over to the EPRDF regime. In the early nineties, Azanaw Demile, a refugee who was a member of the EPRP, was deported in a similar way and has disappeared since. A few years ago Sudan deported four others whose lives would be threatened if they fell into the hands of the EPRDF--the four were tortured and thrown into one of the many secret prisons. Of the 15, the elder Atanaw Wassie, with a long history of struggle against the former military regime, has been disappeared under EPRDF custody.

SOCEPP has now received further report that in the past week the 14 prisoners, kept under bad condition in Kaliti prison, had been subjected to a round the clock interrogation and pressures "to repent and denounce the others". They have been told that failure to do so will assure their "longterm incarceration" after due condemnation and "no one will be able to secure" their release. Denied medical care, still wearing the Djelabias the Sudanese gave them months ago, denied contact with relatives, the prisoners are under serious psychological pressure. The denial of their basic rights is almost total.

SOCEPP calls not only on the brutal treatment and interrogation to stop (the prisoners are being pressurized to admit their part in violent conspiracy and action against the EPRDF) but demands the immediate release of the deportees. SOCEPP once again calls on the UNHCR not to abandon its duties and to mobilize protests against the Sudanese action.

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