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November 12, 2013.

**OPEN LETTER TO:**

His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz

Bin Abdurhman bin Faisal bin Turki bin Abdullah bin Mohammad

Ruler of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Riyadh.

**FROM:**

Kidane Alemayehu

Re: **Saudi Arabia's Abuse of Human Rights: Is This How Your Country Pays for Its Gratitude to Ethiopia?**

Your Majesty,

Please permit me, Your Majesty, to express my humble compliments and to bring the following serious predicament to your kind attention.

Your Majesty should, I feel sure, be aware of the desperate situation being encountered by thousands of migrant Ethiopians in your kingdom these days due to the atrocities and abuse of human rights inflicted on them by members of your Kingdom's police force and associated civilian youth. It is common knowledge reported over credible international media that innocent Ethiopian migrants are imprisoned unjustly and without basic facilities; women are raped; many are beaten severely; and, worse still, a number of migrants have been killed. It is well known that the action by the Saudi authorities is not consistent with international law.

Your Majesty is aware of how Ethiopians welcomed refugees from Mecca with the highest respect and dignity when the followers of Prophet Mohammed were persecuted by the Arab authorities during the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. Your Majesty knows full well that Prophet Mohammed had advised his followers, including his daughter Rockeya and her husband, to take refuge in Ethiopia where their rights would be respected. Over 100 such refugees lived peacefully in Ethiopia for 15 years until peace prevailed in Mecca and Medina and they returned with gifts and good wishes from the Ethiopian emperor.

When most of the Arab Peninsula, including Mecca, was under Ethiopian control during the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD and earlier times, Arabs were never treated in such a hideous manner.

In these modern times also, it is well known that Saudi Arabia is blessed with opportunities of investment in Ethiopia as well as ownership of a huge land area which Saudi Arabia utilizes at minimal cost for agricultural purposes. Opportunities also exist for an expanded collaboration between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia in an atmosphere of mutual respect and interest.

Taking the above consistently positive response by Ethiopia, I wonder, Your Majesty, how your government would permit such atrocious crimes against innocent migrants including pregnant women. Therefore, I herewith appeal to Your Majesty and to your government as well as to the international community:

1. To immediately cease the abuse of human rights against Ethiopian migrants in Saudi Arabia;
2. To treat the migrants with the respect that is due to them in accordance with international law;
3. To ensure that the Saudi police force and others responsible for the abuse of human rights committed against Ethiopian migrants are brought to justice without any delay; and
4. To ensure that those Ethiopians who suffered injustices in Saudi Arabia are duly compensated.

I do trust, Your Majesty, you will accord the attention that this urgent situation demands and hope that a prompt and effective action will be taken.

With the utmost respect,

Kidane Alemayehu.

CC: Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, Ethiopia; and Chairman of the African Union

CC: President Barack Obama, USA

CC: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, United Nations

CC: Commissioner Nils Muiznieks, Human Rights, Council of Europe