



Ethiopia – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 15 July 2013

Any information on how former party members (2006- 8) of Oromo opposition parties are currently treated? Is there any information on the treatment of former party members, upon their return to Ethiopia?

Information regarding the treatment of former members of an Oromo opposition party was not found among sources available to the Research and Information Unit.

A document submitted to the UN Human Rights Council comments on the treatment of persons perceived to be sympathizers of an opposition group as follows:

“From what we have witnessed so far in Ethiopia, we could undoubtedly say that even being perceived as a sympathizer of an opposition group makes an individual vulnerable to incremental persecution, up to and including loss of jobs (in the case of civil servants), denial of the right to work, extra-judicial arrests and long periods of detention with or without trial, torture, and even disappearances and extrajudicial killings, etc. Most Ethiopians have learned that attempts at freely, openly, and peacefully opposing the ruling EPRDF party are a life-threatening undertaking.” (UN Human Rights Council (23 May 2013) *Written statement submitted by the Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa (HRLHA), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status*, p.4)

See also 2013 Amnesty International annual report for Ethiopia which, in a section headed “Arbitrary arrests and detentions”, states:

“The authorities arrested members of political opposition parties, and other perceived or actual political opponents. Arbitrary detention was widespread. According to relatives, some people disappeared after arrest. The authorities targeted families of suspects, detaining and interrogating them. The use of unofficial places of detention was reported.” (Amnesty International (23 May 2013) *Annual Report 2013: Ethiopia*)

This report also states:

“Hundreds of Oromos were arrested, accused of supporting the Oromo Liberation Front.” (ibid)

A Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia country advice document, in response to the question “How are failed asylum seekers treated in Ethiopia?”, states:

“Recent information on the treatment of failed asylum seekers is very limited, but indicates that the treatment of a returnee by the authorities would depend

on the extent to which the person was seen to be a threat to the current government.” (Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia (10 September 2010) *Ethiopia – ETH37377 – Amharas – Asylum seekers – Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) – Ginbot 7*, p.2)

This document also states:

“Advice provided to the RRT by DFAT in February 2008 stated that it would be very difficult to assess what threat a person who had previously been active with the CUD would face on return to Ethiopia. DFAT advised that the 'key question would be whether or not Ethiopian authorities saw him as a real threat. If so, then he could face serious problems, but if not then he might be able to return without incident'.” (ibid, pp.2-3)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References:

Amnesty International (23 May 2013) *Annual Report 2013: Ethiopia*
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/ethiopia/report-2013#section-46-6>
(Accessed 15 July 2013)

Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia (10 September 2010) *Ethiopia – ETH37377 – Amharas – Asylum seekers – Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) – Ginbot 7*
<http://www.mrt-rrt.gov.au/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=12984903-fc0e-4f8d-ac2f-b5a14985b363>
(Accessed 12 July 2013)

UN Human Rights Council (23 May 2013) *Written statement submitted by the Human Rights League of the Horn of Africa (HRLHA), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status*
http://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1930_1371032815_g1313890.pdf
(Accessed 15 July 2013)

Sources Consulted:

Amnesty International
BBC Monitoring
Electronic Immigration Network
European Country of Origin Information Network
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
IRIN News
Landinfo
Lexis Nexis

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
Refugee Review Tribunal
UK Home Office
UNHCR Refworld
US Department of State