



ETHIOPIA

Report for the Second Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) 19th Session

Date of submission: September 2013

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African Rights Monitor (ARM) is a non- governmental advocacy organization created to monitor human rights violations in conflict and post-conflict African territories. Currently ARM is conducting monitoring projects in Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Kenya. The organization aims to advocate for the protection of human rights in African countries by investigating and exposing human rights violations and holding abusers accountable for their inhumane actions

Introduction

This report highlights the lack of progress and the failure by Ethiopia to fully cooperate with the Human Rights Committee and the implementation of recommendations made during the first UPR review of Ethiopia in 2009. Despite the awareness of the poor human rights record of Ethiopia and the numerous recommendations suggested by State members, the humanitarian and human rights situations in several parts of Ethiopia, specifically the Somali regional State (Ogaden) has since deteriorated while the suffering of civilians increased with no unfettered access allowed to the international NGO's and human rights organizations.

Ethiopia rejected 32 of the recommendations made during the UPR, all of them based on basic human rights conventions and standards. African Rights Monitor focuses on the recommendations relating to the Somali region of Ethiopia also known as Ogaden. This territory, inhabited by the Somali population, is practically under martial law and is a war zone with fighting between the government forces including special local militia and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), a rebel group claiming to fight for the exercise of self-determination of the Somali people in Ethiopia. The fighting escalated after April 2007 when the ONLF attacked oil facilities run by a Chinese company and guarded by the Ethiopian army; a large number of Ethiopians and Chinese oil workers died in these attacks. Since then, the government sealed off the region and expelled the ICRC and MSF (Doctors without borders). The government has banned trade and aid from an area straddling seven of the nine regions of the Somali regional state, asserting that these were operational military zones. Extrajudicial killing, rape, detention, forceful relocation and confiscation of the private properties have become a daily practice in the Somali regional state.

In 2009, the Ethiopian government decided to recruit a local militia it named Liyu police, which means Special police. The government has recruited, trained, armed, and maintains the Liyu police (special police). Since the formation of the Liyu police, eyewitness reports and victims from the Ogaden report that the armies work



together with the Liyu police operating as death squads, carrying out killings alongside the Ethiopian army.

The Human Rights Committee considered Ethiopia's report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) with the State party in July 2011. The Human Rights Committee noted in its Concluding Observations that this initial review was 17 years overdue. However, it is to be hoped that the State will continue to improve its cooperation with the Treaty Bodies, including by submitting its second periodic report in July 2014 as requested by the Human Rights Committee.

During this review, the Human Rights Committee selected a limited number of the recommendations made in its Concluding Observations to Ethiopia. These recommendations were considered particularly urgent and susceptible to improvement within one year. After one year the State is to provide information on the measure taken to implement these recommendations. The three recommendations selected for this procedure in relation to Ethiopia relate to the investigation of reported human rights violations in the Somali Region, investigation of all allegations of torture, and restrictions on freedom of association and assembly, particularly on the ability of civil society organisations to work on human rights (paragraphs 16, 17 and 25 of the Concluding Observations).

◆ Independent **investigation of serious human rights violations** in the **Somali Regional State** of Ethiopia, measures to prevent future violations and humanitarian access to this region.

a) Instead of investigating violations of human rights in the Ogaden and taking effective measures to stop any further violations, the Ethiopian government introduced the Liyu Police which exacerbated the killing and blatant rape that was already rampant.

I. Between January to June 2012, 612 civilians were detained, including women, children and the elderly while 68 summary executions, and 39 women being raped outside prisons were reported to ARM. There are around 18 000 civilian detainees across the Ogaden, including around 6 000 women. Released victims from detention report that the first thing done to female detainees is to rape them in public to humiliate them. Considerable numbers of women raped in prisons become pregnant and bear children in detention. Detainees continue to be ill treated, with torture and rape being common. Relatives of detainees are required to provide food for their detained relatives, but are not informed when their relatives are executed, so that they continue to provide food. On 28 February this year, the regional Somali State television (ESTV) showed images of 857 detainees being released from the central jail in Jigjiga, the capital of Somali region. These people were detained with out raison for many years. One of the released prisoner's relative said his brother was in jail for five years with no reason given for his arrest. Images can be viewed at the following link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7fxIYdbn4>

II. Another very distressing practice is the targeting of rural civilians. Settlements of nomads are surrounded and corralled into Army Lorries, leaving the children and the animals behind and then transported to another locality and massacred.

III. A new practice that is becoming the norm is to collect hundreds of town people and given them arbitrary sentences of 15 years on the spot. The month of August this year alone more than a thousand detainees were sentenced to 15 years standard jail term in many town in the Somali regional state, the latest being Denan where hundreds of families were detained, then given 15 year jail term and transported to Jail Ogaden 2 in Godey, which was built this year. Jail Ogaden 1 is in Jigjiga and is so over-crowded it has its own slums and internal graveyard.

IV. Torture and ill-treatment are routinely practiced by the Ethiopian army and the Liyu police. One particular method used to dehumanise the Somali people is targeting women and young girls in the urban areas during the night - torturing and raping them.



- V. Humiliation is also used as weapon by bringing detainees in front TV cameras and forcing them to confess that they were criminals or that they had committed ghastly crimes or had raped their own relatives.
 - VI. TV footage aired on Swedish TV shows the head of the Somali regional state assessing Liyu police recruits on how many they had tortured or killed. One of his catch phrases as reported by Liyu police deserter is that *'they shall educate the women with their map organ and the men with AK bullet'*
 - VII. The Ethiopian government refused to allow the ICRC to visit prisons in the Somali regional state, while allowing them to carry out projects in other parts of Ethiopia, due to the mandate of ICRC to monitor the Geneva Convention that Ethiopia has signed.
- ◆ Cooperation with the **UN Human Rights bodies**, especially the **Treaty Bodies**, including **implementation of Treaty Body recommendations**;
- I. To date, the Ethiopian government has not allowed the Human Rights Special Procedures to visit the Ogaden.
 - II. The Ethiopian government shot and detained two Swedish journalists and sentenced them to 11 years in Jail for trying to visit and report on the situation in Ogaden, violating the freedom of information and unbiased reporting. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9RB57L72NU>
 - III. There is no single newspaper in the Ogaden and all media in the Somali Regional state is owned by the Ethiopian government or the regional state. No local or international independent journalist are allowed.
- ◆ Amend the Proclamation for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies so as to bring it into conformity with international human rights standards.

Independent NGOs are no longer allowed to work on human rights in Ethiopia. The freedom of expression and the freedom of association and assembly are not guaranteed to those organizations.

African Rights Monitor recommends that:

1. The Ethiopian government stop all human rights violations and allow the UN full access to investigate Human right violations committed already
2. The UN nominate a special human rights rapporteur to the Somali regional state and request the security council to demand that Ethiopia accept the Rapporteur to have free access to the Somali regional state.
3. The Ethiopian government stop using para-military force in order to met collective punishment against the civilian population.
4. The Ethiopian government give free access to international NGOs, and especially to the ICRC to support the civilian population.