

# **ETHIOPIA ASSESSMENT**

**April 2001**

**Country Information and Policy Unit**

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# **I. SCOPE OF DOCUMENT**

**1.1** This assessment has been produced by the Country Information & Policy Unit, Immigration & Nationality Directorate, Home Office from information obtained from a variety of sources.

**1.2** The assessment has been prepared for background purposes for those involved in the asylum determination process. The information it contains is not exhaustive, nor is it intended to catalogue all human rights violations. It concentrates on the issues most commonly raised in asylum claims made in the United Kingdom.

**1.3** The assessment is sourced throughout. It is intended to be used by caseworkers as a sign-post to the source material, which has been made available to them. The vast majority of the source material is readily available in the public domain.

**1.4** It is intended to revise the assessment on a 6-monthly basis while the country remains within the top 35 asylum producing countries in the United Kingdom.

**1.5** The assessment will be placed on the Internet (<http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk>). An electronic copy of the assessment has been made available to the following organisations:

Amnesty International UK  
Immigration Advisory Service  
Immigration Appellate Authority  
Immigration Law Practitioners' Association  
Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants  
JUSTICE  
Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture  
Refugee Council  
Refugee Legal Centre  
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

# **II. GEOGRAPHY**

**2.1** The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has an area of 1,133,380 sq km and lies in north-eastern Africa. Ethiopia has been land-locked since the independence of its former province of Eritrea on the Red Sea coast in May 1993. It is bordered by Eritrea and Djibouti to the north, Somalia to the east, Kenya to the south and Sudan to the west. The population at the 1984 census was nearly 40 million (excluding Eritrea) with an official estimate in mid-1995 of 56,677,100. The 1994 Constitution established a federal structure of nine autonomous ethnically-based 'national states' and the federal capital territory. The largest city is the federal capital Addis Ababa (population 2,112,737 in 1994). Other important towns are Dire Dawa, Harar, Jijiga, Nazret, Gondar and Dessie. An official estimate of the population in the middle of 1999 was 61,672,000. [1][2][9]

**2.2** The official language is Amharic but many other languages are spoken. English is used widely in official and business circles. There are over 80 different ethnic groups in Ethiopia, referred to officially as 'nationalities'. The Oromos are the largest single group, comprising over one third of the total population. The Amharas make up almost another third. Other important population groups are the Tigreans (or Tigrayans), Somalis and Afars. The nine autonomous national states established under the 1994 Constitution, broadly reflecting regional ethnic boundaries, are those of the Afar,

Amhara, Benishangul/Gumuz, Gambela, Harari, Oromo, Somali, Southern and Tigre (or Tigray) peoples. About 45% of the population are Muslims and 40% adherents of the Ethiopian Orthodox (Tewahido) Church. There are small Evangelical Protestant and Roman Catholic populations. Most of the Jewish Falasha population was evacuated to Israel between 1984 and 1991. Between 5 and 15% of the population are animists. [1][2][3][7][9]

**2.3** Ethiopia's climate is mainly temperate owing to its high plateau terrain. The average annual temperature is 13°C, with abundant rainfall in some years and low humidity. The lower country is very hot and subject to drought conditions. Ethiopia is one of the world's least developed countries. Over 88% of the population is engaged in agriculture, contributing 51.7% of GDP in 1993/94. Coffee is the principal cash crop, accounting for nearly two-thirds of export earnings in 1994/5. Major trading partners are Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy, Japan and the USA. The economy, blighted by years of war, State repression, drought, famine and forced resettlement, is heavily indebted and dependent on foreign aid. Ethiopia uses its own solar calendar, some seven years behind the Western calendar. [1][2][3]

## **III. HISTORY**

### **FOUNDATIONS OF ETHIOPIA**

**3.1** Ethiopia, formerly known as Abyssinia, has existed as a political entity since the 1st century BC. It was converted to Christianity in the 4th century AD. Emperor Menelik, who founded the modern capital Addis Ababa, united the country behind his monarchy in the late nineteenth century, resisting attempts by European powers, especially Italy, to take over Ethiopia. Menelik defeated the Italians in 1896 although Italy retained control of coastal Eritrea, which it had annexed in 1890. Menelik embarked upon a modernisation programme whilst firmly retaining his grip on power. [1][2]

**3.2** In the 1930s Emperor Haile Selassie wrested power from the old nobility and established a modern autocracy. In 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia, securing control in 1936. Allied forces ended Italy's occupation in 1941. In 1952 Eritrea, which had become a United Nations (UN) mandated territory after the Second World War, was federated with Ethiopia. However, Haile Selassie dismantled Eritrea's institutions and made it a province of Ethiopia in 1962. Eritrean resistance to Ethiopia's annexation then began, initially led by the mainly-Muslim Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and joined by the more Christian-based Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) in the early 1970s. [1][2]

### **1974 REVOLUTION, THE DERGUE & THE 'RED TERROR'**

**3.3** Haile Selassie was deposed in a military coup led by radical elements in the armed forces in September 1974, against a background of growing demands for democratisation, army mutinies, the revolt in Eritrea, serious economic difficulties and famine. Haile Selassie was detained by the military and died in their custody in August 1975. [1][2]

**3.4** The Armed Forces Co-ordinating Committee, known as the Dergue (or Derg), meaning Shadow, established a Provisional Military Government (PMG) led by Lieutenant-General Aman Andom. Real power however rested with the Dergue itself, made up of 109 soldiers up to the rank of major. Disputes over how to deal with the revolt in Eritrea resulted in the assassination of General Aman, himself an Eritrean, and two other Dergue members in November 1974. 57 former senior military and

civil officials, including two former Prime Ministers and 17 generals, were also executed without trial. [1][2]

**3.5** Brigadier-General Teferi Benti, the nominal Chairman of the Dergue following General Aman's death, was appointed the new Head of State. His two Vice-Chairmen were Lieutenant-Colonel Atnafu Abate and Major (later Lieutenant-Colonel) Mengistu Haile Mariam, who emerged as the most influential member of the Dergue in 1975. The Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) replaced the PMG. Ethiopia was declared a socialist state in December 1974 and the PMAC embarked upon a series of reforms known as 'Ethiopia Tikdem' (Ethiopia First) in 1975. Land, financial institutions and large industrial firms were nationalised and a programme of rural development began, with land reform, health education, a literacy drive and the establishment of peasant co-operatives. [1][2]

**3.6** Despite promises by the Dergue of an eventual return to civilian rule, there was widespread unrest throughout 1975 and 1976. Power struggles took place within the Dergue, between supporters of the Marxist-Leninist All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement (MEISON), which favoured a Soviet-style communist system with military rule, and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), a more popular Marxist-Leninist group which advocated a civilian government and supported the Eritrean independence campaign. The rival groups fought for control of the new State institutions, with acts of terrorism committed, and the conflict spilt over into the Dergue. A restructuring of the Dergue in December 1976 threatened to weaken the position of Colonel Mengistu. [1][2]

**3.7** In February 1977 Colonel Mengistu took control as Head of State and Chairman of the PMAC and had General Teferi Benti and five other leading Dergue members executed. He then began what became known as the "Red Terror" campaign against political and armed opponents, initially on behalf of his allies in MEISON to eliminate the EPRP. Tens of thousands of Ethiopians, particularly in urban areas, were killed or tortured. In mid-1977 Mengistu turned on MEISON and by late 1978 both MEISON and the EPRP had been effectively neutralised. Ethiopia's foreign relations became increasingly dominated by its relationship with the Soviet Union after Mengistu assumed power. [1][2]

## **RESISTANCE IN ERITREA & TIGRE, OGADEN WAR 1977-78**

**3.8** Armed resistance groups took advantage of the confusion following the 1974 revolution. In Eritrea the ELF had been weakened by internal divisions in the 1970s and had split into several factions, the largest being the EPLF. In 1975 a joint ELF and EPLF attack on the Eritrean capital Asmara was only narrowly defeated by the Ethiopian army, whose organisation had been seriously weakened by the revolution. Government retaliation against Eritrea was severe, leading to many Tigrean (or Tigrayan) Christians in Eritrea joining anti-Ethiopian fronts for the first time. [1][2]

**3.9** Resistance against the central government also increased in the Somali-populated Ogaden district and in the Tigre (or Tigray) province, bordering Eritrea. In support of the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), Somalia invaded the Ogaden in July 1977. Having quickly overrun the district, Somalia found its supply lines too stretched and with large-scale military support from Cuba and the Soviet Union, hitherto the main supporter of Siad Barre's Somalia, Ethiopia counter-attacked in February 1978, forcing the Somali army's withdrawal in March 1978. [1][2]

**3.10** The Ethiopian army, strengthened by its new ties with the Soviet Union and its victory in the Ogaden War, went on the offensive in Eritrea in June 1978. It recaptured most of the main towns within three months and forced the EPLF's retreat to the stronghold of Nakfa. The ELF was left

conducting guerrilla operations only. Continuing divisions within the Eritrean resistance movement were to lead to a civil war in Eritrea in 1981. The EPLF, in alliance with the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) from the adjoining Tigre province, forced the ELF into exile in Sudan in 1982. [1][2]

## **WORKERS' PARTY OF ETHIOPIA**

**3.11** Having dealt with Somalia and Eritrean separatists in 1978 Mengistu turned his attentions to the reorganisation of government. With MEISON and the EPRP neutralised, Mengistu set up the Committee for Organising the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE) in late 1979. All other political groups were abolished. COPWE's Central Committee was dominated by the military. In 1984 the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) was formally inaugurated, modelled along the lines of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, with Mengistu as its Secretary-General. However, the WPE failed to win public support and was widely seen as a system for furthering the military regime's control. [1][2]

**3.12** In preparation for the eventual transfer of power from the PMAC to a civilian government, a referendum in February 1987 endorsed a new Constitution and national elections were held in June 1987 for a new legislature, the National Shengo (Assembly) with over 800 seats. At the inaugural meeting of the National Shengo the PMAC was abolished, the country was renamed the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) and Mengistu was unanimously elected President of the PDRE, as well as head of the armed forces. [1][2]

## **ETHIOPIAN 'NATIONALITIES'**

**3.13** The 1974 Revolution raised expectations amongst several of Ethiopia's ethnic groups, or 'nationalities', particularly the Oromos, Somalis, Afars and Tigreans, and in the annexed province of Eritrea. The Afar population, who live in the north of Ethiopia (and also in Eritrea and Djibouti), achieved local autonomy in 1977, with members of the Afar National Liberation Movement, which co-operated with the PMAC, being appointed as local administrators. [1][2]

**3.14** Despite its defeat in the 1977-78 Ogaden War, Somalia continued to support the WSLF and the Somali Abo Liberation Front (SALF), which operated in the south-eastern Bale and Sidamo regions, into the mid-1980s when both groups collapsed internally. Ethiopia backed opposition groups inside Somalia opposed to Siad Barre's regime. Relations between Ethiopia and Somalia improved in 1986 and, under pressure in Eritrea, diplomatic relations were resumed in 1988. [1][2]

**3.15** The Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) became active in the 1980s, advocating self-determination for the Oromo people and the promotion of their culture and language. Although Mengistu's Government was initially supported by Oromo peasant farmers, who had benefited from land reforms in 1975, peasant opposition to farming co-operatives increased support for the OLF. The Government responded with widespread arrests of Oromos in Addis Ababa and elsewhere. The OLF was militarily weak, able to operate only along the Sudanese border and in an area south-west of Harar. [1]

**3.16** The growth of the TPLF, established in 1975, posed a more serious threat to the Mengistu Government. The Eritrean EPLF provided arms and training to the TPLF, which was able in 1977-78 to defeat opponents in the EPRP, which had been operating in the Tigre region since 1975. Support for the TPLF grew during the period of Mengistu's "Red Terror" and with its calls for self-determination for the Tigrean people. The TPLF set up the Marxist-Leninist League of Tigre in the

mid-1980s. The TPLF received support, like the Eritrean and Oromo groups, from Sudan. However, conflicts with other anti-Government groups, including its former backers the EPLF, weakened the TPLF and Government forces achieved considerable success against the TPLF in campaigns in 1985 and 1986. [1][2]

**3.17** With the proclamation of the PDRE in 1987 Ethiopia was declared to be a unified socialist state under the 'democratic centralism' of the WPE. The new Constitution created five autonomous regions, four of which were based on ethnicity: Tigre for the Tigrean people, Dire Dawa for the Somali Issa clan, Ogaden for all other Somalis, Assab for the Afar people and Eritrea, with its nine component nationalities. However, the EPLF and TPLF, being by now committed to the removal of the Mengistu Government, rejected the new regional structure. [1][2]

## **OVERTHROW OF MENGISTU**

**3.18** Failure to resolve the political crisis of Ethiopia's nationalities was matched by economic disaster. State farms were inefficient and the severe drought of 1984-85 exacerbated the problem. About 600,000 people were moved from drought-affected areas to the south and west in a very unpopular Government resettlement programme, which the Government abandoned in 1986 following international criticism. The TPLF also moved 200,000 people from Tigre, the hardest-hit drought area, to Sudan. Further problems arose in 1989-90 with the unpopular 'villagisation' programme, and subsequent fall in agricultural production levels, in which villages were grouped together, for political control and security purposes. [1]

**3.19** Military setbacks for the Government from 1988 onwards led to the loss of most of Tigre province to the TPLF in 1989 and most of Eritrea to the EPLF, which had begun a new offensive in December 1987. The diversion of Government forces to Eritrea proved beneficial to the TPLF's campaign in Tigre. A State of Emergency was declared in Eritrea and Tigre in May 1988. Government forces made some gains in Tigre but major defeats in early 1989 forced the Government to abandon the region. The TPLF, once in control of Tigre in 1989, established a united front in September 1989, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), with the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) (which later became the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM)), an Amhara-based group set up by the TPLF to fight in non-Tigrean areas. [1][2]

**3.20** While the EPLF and TPLF/EPRDF continued their military campaigns against Mengistu's Government the two groups did agree to take part in peace discussions. Negotiations between Government and EPLF representatives took place in the United States in September 1989, chaired by former US President Carter. These and further discussions held in Nairobi in November 1989 failed to produce any agreement between the opposing sides as neither was prepared to move its position on the question of Eritrean independence. The talks were abandoned after the EPLF captured the Eritrean port city of Masawa in February 1990. Discussions were also held in Rome in November 1989 between Ethiopian Government and TPLF representatives, but these collapsed in March 1990. [2]

**3.21** The EPRDF set up other groups as it advanced southwards, including the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) when the OLF refused to join the EPRDF, but the TPLF still formed the main element of the EPRDF, although it switched its emphasis from achieving Tigrean self-determination to the removal of Mengistu's regime and the establishment of a democratic government in Ethiopia. By November 1989 EPRDF forces had reached within 160 km of Addis Ababa. [1]

**3.22** Mengistu was forced to make concessions as his Government's military position worsened, particularly after the loss of the vital Eritrean port of Massawa to the EPLF in February 1990, which cut supply lines to Addis Ababa. Socialism was effectively abandoned in March 1990 and the WPE was renamed the Ethiopian Democratic Unity Party (EDUP), with membership open to non-Marxists. Economic reform of the centralised socialist system began with moves towards a market economy and inheritance of land was permitted. The economy however was in a state of collapse, reflecting the Government's worsening military position. Also, with the fall of communism in Eastern Europe Mengistu's Government lost access to cheap fuel and its arms supply. Opposition forces continued to advance, and by the end of April 1991 the EPRDF had taken Ambo, 130 km west of Addis Ababa while the EPLF was only 50 km from the main Eritrean port of Assab. [1][2]

**3.23** In January 1991 the EPRDF announced a moderate political programme which made no reference to Marxism and was acceptable to the United States. As opposition forces closed in on Addis Ababa Mengistu's armies ended their resistance. Mengistu fled Ethiopia on 21 May 1991, seeking asylum in Zimbabwe, where he remains to the present day. In March 2001 he was granted permanent residence in Zimbabwe. Vice-President Lieutenant-General Tesfaye Gebre Kidan assumed control of the Government. [1][2][4f]

## **TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, ERITREA'S INDEPENDENCE**

**3.24** Following Mengistu's departure, talks began in London under United States auspices to ensure an orderly transfer of power. With the failure of these talks, EPRDF forces entered Addis Ababa on 28 May 1991 with the public support of the United States, encountering little resistance. An interim government was established by the EPRDF and at the same time the EPLF set up a provisional administration in Eritrea, pending the holding of a referendum on Eritrean independence. Eritrea thereby effectively seceded from Ethiopia, independence being approved in a referendum by the Eritrean people in April 1993 and formally proclaimed, with recognition by Ethiopia, on 24 May 1993. Agreements between the two countries were reached on defence, security, trade, economic matters and the joint use of the Eritrean port of Assab, vital to Ethiopia's economy. Relations between Ethiopia and independent Eritrea remained generally cordial until a long-running border dispute led to the outbreak of hostilities in May 1998. (See also sections 3.44-3.56) [1][2]

**3.25** The EPRDF convened a national conference in July 1991, attended by some 20 political and ethnically-based groups, to discuss Ethiopia's future political structure and set up the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE). A national charter prepared by the EPRDF was adopted with some amendments and provided for self-determination for Ethiopia's nationalities and guaranteed freedom of association and expression. The conference elected an 87-member Council of Representatives to govern the country for a transitional two year period, following which free elections would be held. The Council of Representatives elected the EPRDF's Chairman and TPLF leader, Meles Zenawi, as Chairman of the Council and thereby President of Ethiopia. Tamirat Layne, Vice-Chairman of the EPRDF and Chairman of the EPDM (which became the ANDM in January 1994), was elected Prime Minister. 32 political groups were subsequently represented on the Council of Representatives, with EPRDF-allied groups holding 32 of the 87 seats. The OLF had 12 of the 27 seats allocated for Oromos. Seven different groups were represented on the Council of Ministers, including the OLF which held four Ministerial positions. [1][2]

**3.26** Despite the participation of various political and ethnic groups in the TGE, violent clashes continued in many parts of Ethiopia in 1991, prompted partly by the dominance of the EPRDF and its allies in the new administration. Government forces clashed with the EPRP in the Gojam and Gondar



regions and in August and September 1991 EPRDF and OLF supporters clashed, although both parties were co-operating at government level at that time. Government troops, mainly Tigreans, also encountered opposition from Afar, Issa and Gurgureh forces. [1][2]

## **ETHNIC AUTONOMY & ETHNIC TENSION**

**3.27** In November 1991 the TGE fulfilled its promise of autonomy for Ethiopia's different nationalities when it announced the establishment of 14 new administrative regions with autonomy in regional law and internal affairs, based largely on ethnic and linguistic boundaries. The new Constitution of 1994 further reorganised the regions into nine autonomous 'national states' and the federal capital territory, reflecting the EPRDF's support for a federal system of government based on ethnicity and language. Some nationalities, such as the Tigreans and Oromos, appeared to gain from the reorganisation while others that were more widely spread did not seem to fair so well. [1][2][9]

**3.28** A great many new political parties, mostly ethnically-based, emerged in the early 1990s. By 1993 there were over 100 parties although in the May 1995 elections only 49 groups participated. As Tigreans make up only 7% of Ethiopia's politicians the Tigrean-dominated EPRDF has set up surrogate parties with which it could form alliances, although only one such organisation, the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Union (SEPDU), established in 1992, has joined the EPRDF to date. [1]

**3.29** Relations between the EPRDF and the OLF deteriorated during 1991 and 1992, although the OLF remained within the TGE. The OLF was opposed to the EPRDF-sponsored OPDO and clashes between OLF and EPRDF supporters occurred as both groups sought to better their position in the Oromo-populated areas in the run up to the 1992 regional elections. A cease-fire between the EPRDF and OLF, under United States and EPLF auspices, was agreed upon in April 1992. [1][2]

## **1992 REGIONAL ELECTIONS, CLASHES WITH THE OLF**

**3.30** The regional elections in June 1992 were boycotted by the OLF and other groups who alleged EPRDF intimidation of opposition groups, although the OLF itself harassed civilians and election officials. International observers, including representatives of the European Union, the United States and the Organization of African Unity, concluded that some of the claims of electoral malpractice made against the EPRDF were, at least in part, justified. The EPRDF and its allies won 90% of the votes cast. Shortly afterwards the OLF withdrew from the TGE and warned of the risk of a renewed civil war. On 10 July 1992 political groups, which were signatories to the July 1991 national charter, demanded that the regional election results be annulled. While in the same month the TGE set up a board to look into alleged electoral errors, regional councils were in place in all areas, except the Afar and Somali regions (where elections had been postponed), by late August 1992. Complaints of harassment by the EPRDF and its allied party the OPDO were also made by ethnic Somalis in respect of the regional elections held in the south-east in October 1992. [1][2]

**3.31** Further doubts about the EPRDF's commitment to democratic principles were raised by reports from the Ethiopian Human Rights Council which had identified over 2,000 cases of people being detained without charge by mid-1992, mainly political opponents of the EPRDF, as well as 13 extra-judicial killings. [2]

**3.32** OLF forces captured Asbe Teferi, 150 km from Addis Ababa, in late June 1992 but stronger Government forces were able to secure the capital. Talks in October 1992 between the Government and the OLF, organised by Eritrea's EPLF, proved unsuccessful and the OLF maintained its insistence on the annulment of the June 1992 election results. The EPRDF encouraged the OLF to rejoin the transitional government but hostilities continued between the Government and the OLF in various areas and by mid-December 1992 the Government held some 20,000 prisoners of war. [2]

**3.33** In January 1993 Government security forces ruthlessly suppressed a student demonstration in Addis Ababa, in protest against UN involvement in Eritrean independence discussions. One student died and over 30 were injured. A Government commission of enquiry set up to investigate the matter, which reported in January 1994, blamed the demonstration's organisers for causing chaos and disorder. [2]

**3.34** Differences within the EPRDF emerged in July 1993 when the party's Executive Committee denounced an undisclosed number of party members, apparently in response to criticism by middle-ranking TPLF members of the Government's ethnic regionalisation policy and the lack of economic reform. [2]

## **1994 NATIONAL ELECTIONS & NEW CONSTITUTION**

**3.35** Elections were held in June 1994 to a new national assembly, the Constituent Assembly. The EPRDF won 484 of the assembly's 547 seats. The elections were boycotted by the OLF, the All-Amhara People's Organization (AAPO) and the recently-formed Coalition of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia (CAFPDE), who alleged that Meles' EPRDF-led Government had intimidated their supporters and refused to allow opposition parties to open offices, allegations denied by the Government. [2]

**3.36** The new Constituent Assembly was inaugurated in October 1994 to discuss a draft of a new Constitution, which it approved in December 1994. The Constitution established a federal system of government, dividing Ethiopia into nine autonomous 'national states' and the federal capital territory (Addis Ababa). The Constitution allowed for regional autonomy, including the right of secession. The Constituent Assembly was replaced by a new legislature, the bicameral Federal Parliamentary Assembly, comprising the Council of People's Representatives (CPR), with 548 directly elected members, and the Council of the Federation, with 117 deputies elected by the new regional state assemblies. [2][9]

## **1995 CPR & NATIONAL STATE ELECTIONS, DERGUE TRIALS**

**3.37** Elections of deputies to the CPR and the national state assemblies were held simultaneously on 7 May 1995 but were boycotted by most opposition parties. The EPRDF and its allies won a landslide victory of 483 of the 537 confirmed seats on the CPR. In Tigre the TPLF won all the seats in the state assembly and all the state's seats on the CPR. EPRDF-allied parties met with similar success in the Amhara and Oromo states. The EPRDF won all 92 local assembly seats in Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian National Democratic Movement (ENDM) was the largest opposition party that participated in the election but it failed to win any of the 80 seats it contested. Elections in the Afar and Somali regions, where opposition to the EPRDF was strong, were postponed to June 1995, when pro-EPRDF parties secured narrow victories. International observers concluded that the elections were largely free

and fair but were worried about the lack of participation by opposition parties in the political process. [2][7]

**3.38** Legislative power was transferred from the transitional Council of Representatives to the new Federal Parliamentary Assembly (FPA) on 21 August 1995. The TGE was wound up on 22 August 1995 when the new Constitution took effect and the country was officially renamed the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). On the same day Dr Negasso Gidada, Minister of Information in the TGE and a member of the EPRDF-allied OPDO, was elected President of Ethiopia at a joint session of the FPA. On 23 August 1995 ex-President Meles Zenawi was elected Prime Minister by the CPR and on 24 August Meles appointed a 17-member Council of Ministers, which was approved by the FPA. [2][9]

**3.39** In December 1994 the trial of 69 officials of the former Mengistu Government, including Mengistu who is living in exile in Zimbabwe, commenced in Addis Ababa. The Special Prosecutor's Office (SPO) was established in 1992 to create an historical record of human rights abuses during the Mengistu administration and to bring to justice those found to be criminally responsible. 23 of the defendants were being tried in absentia and five had died while awaiting trial. The defendants were charged with crimes against humanity and genocide between 1974 and 1991. The trial of a total of 5,198 people charged with genocide and war crimes committed under the Mengistu administration began at the Federal High Court in Addis Ababa in 1997. (See also sections 4.10 and 5.50 - 5.51) [2][7]

**3.40** Prime Minister Meles' Government came under increased criticism in late 1995 and early 1996 over its treatment of political opponents, particularly those in the press, intellectuals and civil rights workers. The Secretary-General of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association (ETA), Dr Taye Woldeamayrat, was arrested in mid-1996 on his return from a visit abroad along with several associates, accused of organising the Amhara-based Ethiopian National Patriotic Front (ENPF). The Government held this organisation responsible for terrorist acts, including the attempted assassination of an employee of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1994 and a grenade attack on USAID's offices in Addis Ababa in 1995. In July 1999 Dr Woldeamayrat was sentenced to 15 years in prison and is regarded as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. (See also sections 5.40 and 5.87) [1][2]

**3.41** In 1996 Ethiopia made armed incursions into Somalia to attack bases of al-Ittihad al-Islamia (the Islamic Unity Party), a group seeking independence for the Somali-populated Ogaden district, which claimed responsibility for terrorist attacks on three hotels in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa in early 1996 and the attempted assassination of the Chairman of the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League and Minister of Transport and Communications in the Federal Government. Further armed incursions into Somalia against al-Ittihad bases were made by Ethiopian forces in following years and in 1999 these operations intensified when Eritrea attempted to distract Ethiopia from the border conflict by supplying Somali factions opposed to Ethiopia. (See also Section 5.41-5.45) There were reports in September 2000 that Ethiopian troops entered Somalia killing Somali civilians. There were further reports in January 2001 of Ethiopian troop activity in Somalia in support of factions opposed to the Somali Transitional National Government. The Ethiopian Government denied these reports. [1][2][25][4n][4o][4p][4q][4r][4s]

**3.42** The Government launched a drive against corruption in September 1995, which it claimed was endemic in Ethiopia. In October 1995 Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Tamirat Layne was accused of 'indiscipline' and removed from office. He was later implicated in corrupt activities. He was also dismissed as Secretary-General of the ANDM and was finally sentenced to 18 years

imprisonment in February 2000. Tefera Walwa replaced him as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. [1][2]

**3.43** In response to an increase in armed attacks by the Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (ARDUF) the Government set up a 25,000 strong Afar military force, under the Afar People's Democratic Organization, in late 1996. Government efforts in November 1996 to negotiate an end to ARDUF's military activities failed, although following a withdrawal of Government forces from sensitive areas in the Afar region and concessions on political prisoners in January 1997 discussions between the two sides resumed. [2]

## **BORDER CONFLICT WITH ERITREA 1998-2001**

**3.44** A simmering border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and a deterioration in relations since Eritrea adopted its own currency to replace the Ethiopian birr in 1997 which resulted in disruption of cross-border trade, led to an outbreak of hostilities on 6 May 1998. Both states accused the other of invading disputed border territory. The dispute was centred on an area of land in the Badme area, although Eritrean forces made incursions into other areas along the border. Ethiopia and Eritrea launched air raids against each other's territory on 5 June 1998. Eritrean aircraft bombed the northern Ethiopian town of Mekele, killing 44 people. Ethiopian aircraft attacked Asmara airport, killing and injuring several people. [1][2][24]

**3.45** In June 1998 Ethiopia and Eritrea accepted a United States-brokered agreement for an immediate cessation of air attacks against each other. Diplomatic efforts by various countries and organisations, including the European union and the OAU, to resolve the dispute continued after fighting halted. [1][2]

**3.46** Large numbers of Ethiopians and Eritreans were expelled from each other's countries in the wake of the border dispute. Each side accused the other of illegal deportations, involving several thousand people, and mistreatment of those remaining. [1][2]

**3.47** In July 1998 Ethiopia accused the OLF and the al-Ittihad al-Islamia militia of entering agreements with the Eritrean Government to fight against Ethiopia. The Eritrean Government denied that any such agreements had been made. [10a][11a][12]

**3.48** Both Ethiopia and Eritrea have issued regular reports that the other side had expelled large numbers of its citizens. In September 1998 the Legal Forum for Peace, a committee of academics and government officials, was established in Ethiopia to draw international attention to claimed Eritrean atrocities against Ethiopian citizens. The Ethiopian Government claimed in December 1998 that Eritrea had expelled over 39,000 Ethiopians since May 1998. In the same month the Eritrean Government claimed that expulsions of Eritreans from Ethiopia exceeded 41,000. [10c][10d][11b]

**3.49** An Amnesty International report issued in January 1999 stated that 52,000 Eritreans had been expelled from Ethiopia since June 1998. Amnesty believed that Ethiopia was operating a systematic policy to arrest and expel anyone of full or part Eritrean descent. Amnesty reported that at least 22,000 Ethiopians had left Eritrea but found no evidence to support Ethiopian claims that 40,000 Ethiopians had been mistreated and forcibly expelled from Eritrea. [28]

**3.50** After a lull in fighting since June 1998, heavy fighting broke out along the disputed border on 6 February 1999, resulting in hundreds of casualties. Each side accused the other of breaking an aerial cease-fire, which had been in place since June 1998. [1][2]

**3.51** There were numerous clashes between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces throughout late 1999 and early 2000. Ethiopia continued to insist on Eritrea's withdrawal from all Ethiopian territory, Eritrea repeatedly rejected this demand, inhibiting progress. In April 2000 delegations from Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed to attend OAU sponsored talks in Algiers, although the delegations would not agree to meet face to face, and the talks collapsed after 6 days. [1]

**3.52** In mid May 2000 hostilities resumed with Ethiopia launching a major offensive. It was estimated that eight million Ethiopians were in need of emergency assistance. Fighting continued although both sides agreed to attend peace talks in Algiers under the auspices of the OAU. [1]

**3.53** Peace talks commenced on 29 May 2000 although fighting continued until a revised agreement was eventually signed on 18 June 2000. The agreement allowed for a return to the pre-May 1998 border positions, a 25km security zone inside the Eritrean border and the deployment of a UN peace-keeping force. [1]

**3.54** In mid September 2000 the UN Security Council approved the deployment of a 4,200 strong peace-keeping force, UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), on the Eritrean side of the border. UNMEE was given an initial mandate of 6 months and charged with monitoring and ensuring that Eritrea and Ethiopia comply with their agreement on the cessation of hostilities, including the redeployment of respective forces to agreed positions. [1]

**3.55** On 12 December 2000 in Algiers Ethiopia and Eritrea signed a comprehensive peace agreement ending the border conflict. The agreement provides for a permanent end to hostilities, the release and repatriation of POWs and civilian detainees, and an investigation into the origins of the conflict. It establishes two neutral commissions. One to delimit and demarcate the boundary and the second to resolve compensation claims. Despite a number of setbacks in implementation, on 18 April 2001 the UN declared that a 25km buffer zone, separating the forces of the 2 countries, had been established. [4a][4b][4c][4d][4g][4h][4i][4j]

**3.56** On 9 March 2001 the UN Security Council voted to extend the UN Mission until 15 September 2001. [5a]

## **NATIONAL ELECTIONS MAY 2000**

**3.57** National elections were held in May 2000 for the House of Peoples Representatives (HPR). Prior to the elections opposition parties claimed that candidates had been refused registration and endorsement, supporters had been harassed and intimidated, local administrators had been partial and state media had failed to provide agreed services. There were also reports of violence associated with polling and demonstrations prior to polling. [4e][5b][25]

**3.58** At the end of 1999 the National Election Board (NEB) had begun investigating abuses related to candidate registration. Reports from throughout the country indicated NEB instructions on registration had been ignored and offices where registration should have taken place were closed hindering the registration of opposition candidates. Citizens who tried to register to vote were told by government personnel that they had to prove citizenship, under the law only citizens can vote and it was reported

that Ethiopians of Eritrean origin were not allowed to register or vote. There were reports that local authorities in Oromiya, Amhara, and Southern Regions occasionally arrested and detained supporters of opposition parties prior to, and following the May elections. Most were released without being charged and although some were released on bail without charges being dropped, trials are not expected to be held. [25]

**3.59** According to observers from the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO), local UN staff, diplomatic missions, political parties, and domestic NGO's, elections were generally free and fair in most areas. Serious election irregularities were reported in the SNNPRS region, particularly Hadiya zone where there were incidents of election officials instructing voters who to vote for, candidates campaigning at polling stations and candidates being pressured into quitting. As a result of these allegations the NEB investigated and ordered new elections in 16 constituencies of SNNPRS. The new elections were held in June and were declared generally free and fair by international observers. [1][25][8]

**3.60** The elections were contested by 17 opposition parties and as expected the incumbent EPRDF won an overwhelming victory gaining 481 seats in the HPR, EPRDF affiliate candidates won a further 37 seats, opposition party candidates 16 and independent candidates 13. The EPRDF domination was only challenged to any extent in the SNNPRS region where opposition candidates won a significant number of seats. A notable result was the Minister of Defence losing his seat to an AAPO candidate. [1][25]

## **IV. INSTRUMENTS OF THE STATE**

### **POLITICAL SYSTEM**

**4.1** Ethiopia continued its transition from a unitary to a federal system of government. The May 2000 elections were the second to be held based on the concept of ethnic federalism. Highly centralised authority, poverty, civil conflict and unfamiliarity with democratic concepts combine to complicate the implementation of federalism. [25]

**4.2** There were reports of arrest and detentions of opposition party supporters in Oromiya, Amhara and southern regions prior to and following the May elections. There were also instances of federal and regional authorities arresting and detaining members of armed opposition parties particularly the OLF and ONLF, these detentions being for involvement in armed actions and the detainees were typically held for days or weeks before being released. [25]

### **THE JUDICIARY**

**4.3** The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, but the judiciary remains weak and overburdened. The federal and regional courts showed signs of judicial independence although in practice severe shortages of adequately trained personnel in many areas and serious financial constraints combined to deny many citizens the full protections provided by the Constitution. For example as a result of arbitrary actions by local officials combined with the shortage of trained and competent prosecutors and judges, the authorities detained hundreds of persons without charge for supposed involvement with the OLF and ONLF. [6][7][25][9]

**4.4** In keeping with the Constitution the Government continues to decentralise and restructure the judiciary along federal lines, establishing courts at district, zonal and regional levels. The Federal High Court and Federal Supreme Court hear and adjudicate original and appeal cases involving federal law, transregional issues and national security. The regional judiciary is increasingly independent with district, zonal, and high and supreme courts mirroring the structure of the federal judiciary. In March 2000 the federal High Court created two new three-judge benches at the High Court level to handle criminal cases. [7][25][9]

**4.5** The Constitution provides legal standing to some pre-existing and customary courts and gives federal and regional legislatures the authority to recognise other courts. By law both parties to a dispute must agree before a customary or religious court may hear a case. Shari'a (Islamic) courts may hear religious and family cases involving Muslims. Although not sanctioned by law some traditional courts still function, and these courts resolve disputes for the majority of citizens who live in rural areas and have little access to formal judicial systems. [7][25][9]

**4.6** Regional offices of the federal Ministry of Justice monitor local judicial developments but the federal judicial presence in the regions is limited. It has been suggested that some local officials believe that they will no longer be held accountable to a higher authority. All judges are guided by the Federal procedural and substantive codes, pending the passage by national state legislatures of laws particular to their regions. [6][7][25]

**4.7** The Government is aware of the severe lack of experienced staff in the judicial system and continues to identify and train lower court judges. Senior government officials charged with judicial oversight estimate that the creation of a truly independent and skilled judiciary would take decades. The government welcomed foreign financial and technical assistance to accelerate this process. [6][7][25]

**4.8** The Constitution affords accused persons the right to a public trial by an ordinary court of law within a reasonable time of charges being made. Accused persons have the right to be represented by legal counsel of their choice. In practice lengthy pre-trial detention is common, closed proceedings occurred in 1998, 1999, and 2000. On occasions detainees were allowed little or no contact with their legal counsel. The Law does not provide for the defence to have access to the prosecution's evidence before a trial. [6][7][25][9]

**4.9** The Government had been implementing a major overhaul of the military justice system, which relied upon foreign assistance to train officers in topics including judicial and non-judicial punishment, human rights and the conduct of soldiers during military operations. The outbreak of hostilities with Eritrea lead to the suspension of most foreign assistance delaying this process. [6][7][25]

**4.10** In 1992 the Special Prosecutors Office (SPO) was set up to create a historical record of the abuses committed during the Mengistu Government and to bring to justice those criminally responsible for human rights violations. (See sections 5.50-5.51 for full details) [6][7][25]

## **MEDICAL SERVICES**

**4.11** It was estimated that in the early 1990s there were four doctors and eight nurses per 100,000 people. With foreign assistance health centres and clinics are steadily expanding into the rural areas. In late 1998 the World Bank announced that it would lend Ethiopia 100 million US dollars to finance

the first five-year phase of an ambitious programme to improve health services. Specifically treatment for diabetes is available in Addis Ababa. [2][17]

**4.12** A statistical survey produced in 1997 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on the level of medical services ranked Ethiopia 182 out of a total of 191 countries. A report issued in June 2000 by the WHO on life expectancy placed Ethiopia in the bottom 10 out of 191 for life expectancy with a figure of 33.5 years, attributing this to the level of HIV/AIDS in the country. This is a reduction from the UN estimate in 1990-95, which was 47.5 years. The WHO figure for the HIV/AIDS in the adult population at the end of 1999 was over 10%. [2][29a][29b][29c]

## **V. HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

**5.1** The 1994 Constitution gives prominence to, and guarantees respect for, human rights. In practice the Government's human rights record continued to be poor. During 1998, 1999 and 2000 security forces at times beat and mistreated detainees and committed extra-judicial killings. Arbitrary arrest and detention and prolonged pre-trial detention are ongoing problems. The Federal Government has difficulty in protecting constitutional rights at a local level. Local administrative, police and judicial systems remain weak in many areas. [6][7][25][9]

**5.2** The Constitution provides for freedom of the press and the independence of the judiciary. In practice the government restricts the rights of the press, continuing to detain and imprison members of the press. (See also sections 5.62-5.67) [25][9]

**5.3** Federal and regional authorities arrest and detain without charge or trial members of armed opposition groups in particular the ONF and ONLF. Typically those arrested are held without charge and released within a few days. At the end of 2000 7,5000 people allegedly associated with armed opposition groups remained in detention. During the border war the Government detained and deported some Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin without due process. (See also sections 5.46-5.49). [6][7][25]

**5.4** In addition to alleged abuses of human rights committed by the Ethiopian Government, various opposition groups, notably the OLF and ONLF, have also been responsible for human rights violations, committed during terrorist operations. (See also sections 5.33, 5.41 and 5.45) [6][7][25]

### **ETHIOPIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS**

**5.5** Domestic human rights organisations operating within Ethiopia include the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO), Human Rights League (HRL), the Peace and Development Committee, the Ethiopian Women's Lawyers Association, the Inter-Africa Group, the National Committee on Traditional Practices, the Society for the Advancement of Human Rights Education, Enway, the Centre for Local Capacity Building and Studies, African Initiatives for a Democratic World Order and Hundee. These and numerous other groups are primarily engaged in civic and human rights education, legal assistance, and trial monitoring. The EHRCO, a self-proclaimed human rights monitoring group, received legal status as an NGO in 1999 after a seven year campaign for recognition. [7][25]



**5.6** Prominent Oromo civic leaders founded the Human Rights League (HRL) in 1997. In April 1998, on the grounds that some board members wished to use the organisation as a front for the OLF, the authorities closed the offices of HRL and confiscated the contents of the office; by the end of 2000 these items had not been returned. The HRL had been operating without a Government licence for three years despite having fulfilled the requirements for licensing. Government investigations into the HRL's alleged links to the OLF continued throughout 1999 and 2000. (See also section 5.28) [7][25]

## **INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS IN ETHIOPIA**

**5.7** The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been operating in Ethiopia since 1997 and has a head office in Addis Ababa and 4 sub-offices elsewhere in the country. The Government allows the ICRC to visit detention centres and prisons throughout Ethiopia. In 1999 there were some problems visiting those detained by the police in Addis Ababa, however in 2000 visits resumed. The ICRC has not been permitted access to some military detention centres where OLF fighters are detained. During the border war involvement of the ICRC in the repatriation of POW's and civilian detainees varied. However in December 2000 following the signing of the peace agreement Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed that all POW repatriations would take place under the auspices of the ICRC. Other international human rights organisations have visited the country in the past three years. [6][7][25][13]

**5.8** The Government continues to encourage international human rights organisations and foreign diplomats to observe the war crimes trials of officials of the Mengistu Government that commenced in 1994. [6][7][25]

**5.9** The 1994 Constitution requires the Government to establish a human rights commission and office of the ombudsman. Progress on this has been slow; in July 2000 parliament completed legislative action to create both of these, although neither was operational by the end of 2000. [25][9]

## **SPECIFIC GROUPS**

### **WOMEN**

**5.10** The 1994 Constitution provides for the equality of women, this provision is often not applied in practice. The provisions of the Constitution are often in conflict with the 1960 Civil Code and the 1957 Penal Code, which are still in force although under review by the Ministry of Justice. The 1960 Civil Code is based on a monarchical constitution that treated women as if they were children or disabled. Culturally based abuses including wife beating and marital rape are pervasive social problems. Although women have recourse to the police and the courts, societal pressures and limited court facilities reduce the availability of these remedies, particularly in rural areas. Discrimination is most acute in rural areas where 85% of the population live. In urban areas women have fewer employment opportunities than men. [7][25][9]

**5.11** The traditional practice of abduction as a form of marriage is illegal under the penal code but is still practised widely in many rural areas particularly the Oromiya region and SNNPRS. Women are often abused physically during abduction and forced sexual relationships accompany many marriages by abduction. On 29 July 2000 the Government adopted a new family law which took effect from 4 July 2000. Amongst other provisions this raised the legal marriage age for girls to 18. Family

arbitration councils which in the past had the power to dissolve marriages can now only engage in arbitration and reconciliation counselling, only the courts have the power to grant divorces. Domestic violence is not considered a serious justification under the law for divorce. [7][25][14b]

**5.12** In 1997 the Government adopted a plan of action aimed at enhancing the status of women. In 1999 and 2000 since the adoption of this program few improvements were noted. According to a study produced by the National Committee on Traditional Practices in Ethiopia (NCTPE) in 1998 certain harmful practices such as early marriage and marriage by abduction appeared to be declining. [7][25]

**5.13** The majority of girls undergo some form of female genital mutilation (FGM) which is widely condemned by international experts. The law does not prohibit FGM although the government discourages it officially, supporting the NCTPE and educational programmes in schools. The NCTPE survey in 1998 indicated that in excess of 72% of the female population had undergone FGM, which was a reduction from the estimated figure of 90% in 1990. [7][25]

**5.14** Social practices obstruct investigations into rape and the prosecution of rapists. Many women are not aware of their legal rights under the law. It is estimated that there are more than 1,000 rapes a year in Addis Ababa however there were only 168 rape convictions nation-wide in the year ending September 2000. [7][25]

**5.15** Although the status of women and their level of political participation is greater than it has ever been women are still only represented in small numbers in government and as senior figures in political organisations. Only one of the 15-member Council of Ministers is a woman; two other women hold ministerial rank and a number of others hold senior positions. Following the May 2000 elections there were 42 women among the 545 members of the lower House of People's Representatives and 10 among the 113 members of the upper House of Federation, including the speaker. In 1999 six of the 23 judges in the Federal High Court were women. In 2000 there were three women on the Supreme Court. [7][25]

## **CHILDREN**

**5.16** The Government has encouraged efforts by domestic and international NGOs that focus on children's social, health and legal issues. By law primary education is compulsory, free and universal, however despite Government efforts to increase the number of schools, including the construction of 303 new schools in 1999, there are not enough schools to meet needs. Only 61% of male primary age children and 41% of female primary age children attend school. The overall literacy rate is estimated to be between 20% and 30%. Only 12% of males and 8.5% of females attend secondary school. During 2000 over 46,000 males and 27,000 females obtained a school leaving certificate allowing them to go on to higher education; there were spaces in institutions of higher education for only a small percentage of these. [7][25]

**5.17** Under the Labour Law the minimum age for paid employment is 14 years. Special provisions cover children aged between 14 and 18 years, including the prohibition of night work and hazardous work, and govern the number of hours children may work. The Government has made some efforts to enforce these regulations however social welfare activists, civic organisers, government officials and entrepreneurs agree that child labour is pervasive throughout the country. The Government maintains there is no child labour problem and that most economically active children are engaged in family-based, non-exploitative child work which is part of the socialisation process. Forced or compulsory

labour by children is illegal but there are reports that it occurs. Child labourers are often abused; a survey published in 1999 indicated a figure of 70% of abuse among child urban labourers. [7][25]

**5.18** There are approximately 200,000 street children in urban areas, 150,000 in Addis Ababa itself and it is believed this figure is growing. These children beg individually or as part of a gang or work in the informal sector. There were reports in 1998, 1999 and 2000 that “handlers” sometimes maim or blind children to increase their earnings. [7][25]

**5.19** Child prostitution continues to be a problem and is believed to be increasing. There are no laws making prostitution or child prostitution criminal offences. There were reports in 1999 and 2000 that girls as young as 11 are recruited to work as prostitutes and kept ignorant of the risks of HIV/AIDS. In addition rural families sold teenage girls to hotel and bar owners on main truck routes although reports of this practice are difficult to confirm. Young girls are prized, as clients believe they are disease free. [7][25]

**5.20** Despite a new family law setting the age of consent for marriage for males and females as 18, early childhood marriage particularly in rural areas is common. In the Afar region in the East the traditional practice of marrying young girls to older men continues but is coming under greater scrutiny and criticism. During 2000 proclamations were passed that established the Human Rights Commission (HRC) this provides for a commissioner and ombudsman to be specifically responsible for the rights of women and children. [25][14a]

## **HOMOSEXUALS**

**5.21** Ethiopian law prohibits homosexual acts for both men and women. Penalties range from 10 days imprisonment to 10 years where the offence involves violence, intimidation, coercion, transmission of disease, committing homosexual acts with a person under 15 or where shame or despair drives the victim to committing suicide. [15]

## **'NATIONALITIES'/ETHNIC GROUPS**

**5.22** Ethiopia has over 80 ethnic groups, or ‘nationalities’. Historically the Amharas and Tigreans from the northern highlands have played major roles in the country's life. Some ethnic groups, including the Oromos, the largest single ethnic group, claim to have been subjugated during the nineteenth century by the dominant Amharas and Tigreans. The present Government's policy of regionalisation attempts to address ethnic concerns. The new federal structure, with regional states based largely on major ethnic boundaries, has granted local populations much greater control over their own affairs. The Constitution provides for equal recognition for all Ethiopian languages although Amharic is the working language of the Federal Government. [1][2][6][7][25][9]

**5.23** In recent years efforts have been made to increase the ethnic diversity of members of the military. This has been largely successful, by most accounts the military is an ethnically diverse organisation with little friction between the various groups particularly in the lower ranks. In the higher ranks officers are much less ethnically diverse. Promotions in late 2000 were proportionately higher among Tigrayans although there were promotions amongst a range of ethnic groups. In 2000 Oromos were promoted in higher numbers than in previous years. [6][7][25]

**5.24** Ethnic clashes during 2000 resulted in a number of deaths and injuries. In July 2000 clashes were reported between the Oromo Borena community and ethnic-Somali Garre pastoralists resulting in approximately 40 deaths and the theft of a large amount of livestock. In October 2000 clashes over water and grazing rights are believed to have resulted in a further 150 deaths. In 1998 and 1999 there were continuing reports of conflicts between the Nuer and the Anuak in Gambella national state in western Ethiopia, these reflect a long-standing history of tension between these two tribal groups. [6][7][25]

## **- OROMOS & THE OLF**

**5.25** The OLF, which has been in armed opposition to the Ethiopian Government since 1992, is one of a number of political organisations which is not permitted to participate in the political process as it will not renounce violence and will not recognise the elected government as a legitimate authority. Although the OLF is, thus, an illegal organisation, simple membership of the OLF is not necessarily cause for arrest. OLF members travel abroad for negotiations with the Government without hindrance. The Government draws a distinction, however, between rank-and-file members of the OLF and the organisation's leadership. In 1996 the OLF signed a military co-operation agreement with another armed opposition group the ONLF. [1][6][7][25]

**5.26** Military forces conducted low-level operations against the OLF in parts of the Oromo national state in 1998 and an increased number in 2000. Military camps were used for the temporary detention and interrogation of OLF supporters and organisers. At the end of 2000 approximately 7,500 persons allegedly associated with armed opposition groups remained in detention. Most detainees were accused of participating in armed actions for the OLF or ONLF. The ICRC had restricted access to these military detention centres. The Government continued to detain persons suspected of sympathising or being involved with the OLF. In August 2000 Dr Moga Frissa vice president of an Oromic civic organisation was arrested on charges of involvement with the OLF. The judge in the case did not accept the charges of subversion and aligning with a terrorist organisation and he was released on 24 September 2000. [6][7][25]

**5.27** In October 1997 three alleged OLF members were shot down by police in the street and there has been no investigation into this matter. [1][6]

**5.28** In November 1997 police arrested 17 alleged OLF supporters. In December 1997 31 Oromos were charged in connection with various bomb attacks in April of that year. These included 7 members of the HRL. In 1998 Amnesty International reported a number of detentions which appeared to be frequent, allegations of armed offences were made against most of the detainees. [1][18][7]

**5.29** The UN Special Rapporteur, in his report of December 1997 to the 54th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, expressed his concern to the Ethiopian Government at the consistency of allegations of torture made by people detained, especially by the military, on suspicion of involvement with the OLF. The Ethiopian Government was urged to ensure that detention and interrogation practices of the military when engaged in counter-insurgency operations met minimum international standards. [19][20]

**5.30** The UN Commission on Human Rights' Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, in its report of December 1997 to the Commission, gave details of the cases of two Oromos, whose detention appeared to be arbitrary and politically motivated, based on their support for the OLF. The cases

appeared to contravene articles of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Ethiopia is a signatory. [21]

**5.31** The UN Commission on Human Rights' Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, in its report of January 1998 to the Commission, gave details of five new cases of reported disappearances in 1997, and further details on two previously notified cases, mostly of ethnic Oromos, that it had transmitted to the Ethiopian Government. Information had been given to the Working Group by the Ethiopian Government on one of the cases. [22]

**5.32** The murder of an EPRDF official near the border between Oromo and Southern People's national states in July 1998 prompted inter-ethnic fighting between the Gudji Oromos and the Geddeo in villages around Hagare Mariam. 22 of the 88 kebeles (municipalities) in the area were badly damaged. In September 1998 the Government began repatriating some 160,000 displaced persons to the villages from which they had fled. All had returned by the end of 1998. [6]

**5.33** During 2000 there were various reports of landmines being laid by the OLF and the ONLF, which were estimated to have killed 2 to 5 persons per month during the year. In particular the OLF claimed responsibility for several landmine attacks along the Addis Ababa to Djibouti railway, which resulted in 5 to 15 deaths and several injuries. In June 2000 it was reported that 200 people had been arrested near the site of a landmine explosion which derailed a train. Those arrested were OLF members or supporters. [25]

**5.34** During 2000 some journalists who had written articles in favour or support of the OLF were found guilty under the Press Laws and imprisoned or fined. [25]

**5.35** The closed trial of 65 Oromos suspected of involvement in OLF terrorist activities in 1998 continued. Six defendants staged a hunger strike in 1999 to protest about their handcuffing for 24 hours a day. They are no longer kept handcuffed. [25]

## **- AMHARAS & THE AAPO**

**5.36** The AAPO was founded in 1992 and is a legally registered party. Its members often complain that the Government restricts the party's ability to campaign for popular support. The party claims to oppose the Government through peaceful means only. The AAPO, which advocates Ethiopian unity, was opposed to Eritrea's independence and aims to defend and promote the interests of the Amhara people. [3]

**5.37** The chairman of the AAPO Professor Asrat Woldeyes was convicted in 1994 of conspiracy and incitement to violence and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. In December 1998 he was released, further charges against him were dropped and he was permitted to travel to America for medical treatment. The Ethiopian Human Rights Council praised the Government's decision to release Woldeyes as a humane action. Professor Woldeyes died in the USA on 4 May 1999. He was buried in Addis Ababa and at his funeral in June 1999, a youth attending was shot and killed by an undercover security officer who was subsequently arrested and charged with the crime. No further action had been taken in the case by the end of 2000. [1][26][27][6][23][25]

**5.38** The AAPO is registered as an opposition party with the NEB but has complained that the Government restricts its ability to campaign for popular support. The AAPO complained in 1999 that the Oromiya regional government has refused its application to open branch offices in the region. The

party took part in the May 2000 election when an AAPO candidate won the seat previously held by the Minister of Defence. [1][6][25]

**5.39** 31 AAPO officials and supporters, most detained since 1994, were convicted on treason charges in March 1999. They were convicted of inciting an armed uprising and promoting civil war. An elderly defendant, two women, and a youth received sentences of four years and were released for time served. The remaining 27 received sentences ranging from five to 20 years. AAPO defendants convicted in 1998 on charges of treason completed their prison sentences in 1998 and 1999 but have not been permitted to leave the country. [7][25]

**5.40** The chairman of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association, Dr Taye Woldesemayat, was arrested in mid-1996 on charges of involvement with an Amhara extremist group, the Ethiopian Patriotic National Front (ENPF). In June 1999 the trial concluded with a conviction for treason and alleged involvement in an underground terrorist organization. He was sentenced to 15 years in jail. He is allowed visitors from the diplomatic community. (See also sections 3.40 & 5.87) [2][7][25]

## **- SOMALIS, THE ONLF & AL-ITTIHAD**

**5.41** The Ogaden National Front is a Somali based armed opposition group. Al-Ittihad al-Islam (Islamic Union Party) is another Somali based opposition group, which seeks independence for Ethiopia's Ogaden provinces. This group claimed responsibility for bomb explosions at hotels in 1996 and for the attempted assassination of the Minister of Transport and Communications. [1][2]

**5.42** Amnesty International noted reports of alleged extra-judicial killings by the security forces in areas of armed conflict in the Somali national state in 1996 and claimed that no investigation had been held into allegations of torture, disappearances or extra-judicial killings. There were no confirmed reports of alleged extra-judicial killings by the security forces in 1998. [16][6]

**5.43** Security forces conducted military operations against armed elements of the ONLF and al-Ittihad al-Islam from 1996 with a series of cross-border attacks aimed at disrupting the organisation's bases in Somalia. These attacks resulted in the death of several hundred al-Ittihad members. Security forces continued to carry out low-level security operations against ONLF and al-Ittihad during 1998, and 1999. In 2000 there was an increase in these operations. [1][2][6][7][25]

**5.44** The Somali Democratic League merged with elements of the ONLF in June 1998 to form the Somali Democratic Party (SDP). Ethiopian President Negasso Gidada attended the four-day conference in Jijiga that established the new party. The Chairman of the SDP at the time was Dr Abd-al Majid Husayn, who was the Transport and Communications Minister in the Federal Government. The current chairman is Mohamoud Dirir Gheddi who is currently acting Minister of Transport and Communications. [10b][1]

**5.45** The ONLF regularly use landmines resulting in numerous civilian deaths and injuries. It was estimated that in 2000 landmines laid by OLF and ONLF supporters killed two to five persons per month. By the end of 2000 approximately 7,500 persons allegedly associated with armed opposition groups remained in detention, most detainees were accused of participating in armed actions by the OLF or the ONLF. [25]

## **ERITREANS IN ETHIOPIA**

**5.46** During the border war the Government detained and deported Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin without due process. There were no preliminary hearings to determine the merits of deportation, no right to counsel was provided to detainees and they had limited opportunity to register protests. Although these detentions and deportations were prompted by security considerations they raised concerns about arbitrary arrest and detention, forced exile, the forcible separation of families and nationality issues, in addition those who were detained or expelled suffered hardships and financial losses. Heads of household were taken without warning, detained and often deported within 48 hours. Remaining family members were subjected to arbitrary deadlines to sell property and sometimes taxed on estimates of annual income and unpaid balances on government loans. Deportation orders originated from the Security Immigration and Refugees Affairs Authority (SIRAA) in Addis Ababa. Since the commencement of the border war as many as 75,000 Ethiopians of Eritrean origin have left Ethiopia for Eritrea, the majority were deported although a number left voluntarily. [7][25]

**5.47** In August 1999 all Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin who had voted in the 1993 referendum on Eritrean independence were required to register with SIRAA and complete residence application forms. After registration they received identity cards and residence permits valid for 6 months. These residence permits did not give access to hospitals or other government services. [7][25]

**5.48** The Government stopped deporting Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin after signing the cessation of hostilities agreement in June 2000. It is estimated that more than 200,000 Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin remain in Ethiopia. [7][25]

**5.49** At the end of 2000 approximately 1,200 civilian residents of Eritrean origin remained detained in internment camps at Dedesa. [25][7]

## **FORMER MEMBERS OF THE DERGUE/WPE**

**5.50** The Special Prosecutor's Office (SPO) was set up in 1992 to record the abuses committed during the Mengistu Government and bring to justice those criminally responsible for human rights violations. The SPO had the authority to arrest and interrogate anyone suspected of involvement in the Red Terror Campaign under Mengistu. Trials began before the Federal High Court in 1994 and were continuing at the end of 2000. Defendants have spent seven to eight years in detention awaiting trial while the SPO carried out its lengthy investigations, which began in December 1994. Charges have been brought against 5,198 people, 2,246 are held in detention while the remaining 2,952 are charged in absentia, including former dictator colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam. The defendants are accused of genocide, war crimes and aggravated homicide. The process is subject to frequent and lengthy adjournments, although cases were dealt with more quickly during 2000 most were still in progress by the end of the year. During 2000 five death sentences, one life imprisonment and at least 27 sentences of up to 15 years imprisonment were handed down. No SPO defendants have been released on bail; but by the end of 2000 at least 50 had been released for lack of evidence. In July 2000 the special prosecutor Girma Wakjira was jailed for contempt of court after accusing one of the judges of having participated in the abuses under Mengistu. He was released after two weeks. The judge was replaced and transferred to a different court. [6][7][25]

**5.51** The trial continued of Mamo Wolde former Olympic marathon champion, charged with genocide for the state-sponsored killing of 14 teenagers under the Mengistu regime. The trial also continued of former University of Addis Ababa president Dr Alemayehu Teferra. [25]

## **OTHER ISSUES**

### **FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY & POLITICAL ASSOCIATION**

**5.52** The Constitution provides for the right of peaceful assembly, although on occasions the Government has restricted this right. Organisers of large public meetings or demonstrations must obtain a permit in advance and on occasions the issue of permits has been delayed hindering the organisation of the events. In particular in January 1999 a rally of the Coalition of Ethiopian Opposition Political Parties in Addis Ababa was attended by less than 3,000 and organisers claimed this was as a result of the permit not being issued until the day before the event. The EHRCO and some opposition groups reported problems renting halls from local government officials. [7][25][9]

**5.53** In 1999 and 2000 demonstrations by various groups resulted in police action such as arrests, detentions and the killing of demonstrators. In particular in March 2000 after a student demonstration protesting about the Government's refusal to fund and send them to fight forest fires one student was killed, a further six injured, and over 1,000 students and three teachers were detained. By the end of the year all were released. In November 1999 student demonstrations against the arrest of two teachers who criticised new text books led to widespread demonstrations with up to 10 people being killed, hundreds injured and arrested and as many as 1,000 detained. Most were released but by the end of 2000, 50 elders, teachers and civil servants charged with subversion remained in detention. See section 5.73 for details of student protests in April 2001. [7][25]

**5.54** The Constitution provides for freedom of association and the right to engage in unrestricted peaceful political activity. Political parties must register with the National Election Board (NEB). Parties that do not participate in two consecutive national elections are liable to be de-registered. Registered political parties must also receive permission from regional governments to open local offices and in 1999 the opposition AAPO complained that the Oromiya regional government refused its application to open branch offices in the region. There are 58 organised political parties, eight of which are national; the remainder operate only in limited areas. [25][9]

**5.55** Political participation is closed to organisations which have not renounced violence and which do not recognise the elected government as a legitimate authority. Such organisations include the OLF, MEDHIN, Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces (COEDF), the EPRP and several Somali-based groups, including some elements of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). Radical Amhara groups, the OLF and al-Ittihad were responsible for a series of grenade attacks, bombings, shootings and ambushes that have resulted in a number of deaths and injuries since 1996. [6][7][25]

**5.56** The right of Ethiopian citizens to change their government was exercised for the first time in 1995. Although observers reported that opposition participation in the elections was possible, most opposition groups chose to boycott the polls, claiming that the Government impeded their ability to compete freely. The elections were however judged to be generally free and fair by observers including the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Western donor states and domestic NGOs. [6][7]

**5.57** The constitution requires that elections to the HPR are held every 5 years and as a result further elections were held in May 2000. According to observers from the EHRCO, local UN staff, diplomatic missions and others the elections were judged to be generally fair. Irregularities were noted in one area and as a result new elections were held in that area. (See section 3.57-3.60 for full details) [25][9]



**5.58** Opposition groups allege that some people in detention are held for political reasons but the Government denies that it holds any political prisoners. [6][7][25]

**5.59** Government procedures for the registration of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were changed in 1996. The registration process remains exceedingly slow. In March 2000 after a 7 year wait the EFPJA consisting of 80 members from the private press eventually obtained a certificate of legal representation as a professional association from the Ministry of Justice. [25]

**5.60** The 1994 Constitution and the 1993 Labour Law give the majority of employees the right to form and join trades unions and bargain collectively, although only about 300,000 workers are unionised. Only a small percentage of Ethiopia's population is engaged in formal salaried employment and most of those are in urban areas. 85% of the population is engaged in subsistence farming in rural areas. Employees of the security and civil services and those in 'essential services', such as transport workers and bank staff, are not permitted to strike. The 1993 Labour Law forbids trades unions from acting in an overtly political manner. Unions are free to affiliate with and participate in international labour organisations. [1][2][6][7][25][9]

**5.61** The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) was formed in 1993. Individual unions are not required to belong to CETU. Nine federations, organised on the basis of industrial and service sectors rather than by region, comprise CETU. The Government decertified CETU in December 1994 because of internal management disputes but officially re-established and re-certified it in April 1997. [6][25]

## **FREEDOM OF SPEECH & OF THE PRESS**

**5.62** The Constitution and the 1992 Press Law provides for freedom of speech and of the press. However the Government uses legal and other means to limit these rights in practice. The Press Law contains provisions concerning publishing false information, inciting ethnic hatred and libel. These provisions are used to prosecute and detain journalists and editors. As a result some journalists practice self-censorship. During 2000 the number of journalists in detention reduced, at the beginning of 1999 15 were held, and by the end of 2000 this had dropped to three. Despite the constant threat of legal action the private press remains active and often publishes articles extremely critical of the Government. Many private papers continued in 2000 to publish inaccurate information, unsubstantiated stories, and harsh anti-government articles without any official sanction. The Government has not banned any newspaper or publication. [7][25][9]

**5.63** Foreign journalists are able to operate freely and often write articles critical of the Government and, with their local affiliates, have greater access to Government officials than local journalists. Some foreign journalists were allowed restricted access to the war front and about 10 Ethiopian affiliates of foreign news agencies were allowed to go to the war front in June and July 2000. Local journalists representing privately owned newspapers were not given access to the war front. [7][25]

**5.64** There are approximately 30 independent political Amharic language weekly newspapers and six independent English language papers. There are five EPRDF coalition party newspapers publishing in Amharic, Tigrigna and Oromiffa. In September 2000 the first independent daily in Amharic began publishing. Most private and state newspapers are printed at one of the state-owned printing presses. In July 2000 the only 2 presses capable of printing tabloids raised printing costs due to increases in pulp and paper in the world market. There was an unsuccessful protest as a result and some papers stopped printing for a few days in September. [7][25]

**5.65** Three of the five journalists from the Oromo language newspaper Urji who were arrested in 1997 remained in detention at the end of 2000, and their trials on charges of involvement with terrorist activities and violation of the Press Law continue. [25]

**5.66** During 1999 and 2000 a number of journalists were arrested and detained for various violations of the Press Law generally involving articles supporting opposition parties or criticising the Government. In particular in June 2000 Tewedros Kassa editor-in-chief of 'Ethiopia' was sentenced to 1 year's imprisonment on charges of publishing false information about the TPLF killing captured government soldiers during the Dergue regime. By the end of 2000 approximately 24 journalists who had been arrested and released on bail were still subject to trial for Press Law violations. [25]

**5.67** A number of journalists remain in self-imposed exile abroad rather than face Press Law charges. In particular during 2000 Dawit Kebede, editor-in-chief of Fiameta, and Israel Sebroka, editor-in-chief of Seife Nebelbal, both fled the country. At the end of 2000 27 journalists remained abroad in self-imposed exile. [25]

**5.68** The Office of the Government Spokesperson was established in June 1998 following the outbreak of hostilities with Eritrea. The Spokesperson distributes press releases to the Ethiopian news agency, foreign embassies and foreign news agencies. The Government continues to bar some private newspapers and organisations from attending government briefings and press conferences. Most government officials refuse to meet with private journalists. [6][7][25]

**5.69** Radio is the most influential medium in reaching people living in rural areas. The Press Law allows for private radio stations but the only 2 non-governmental radio stations, Radio Fana, which is controlled by the ruling EPRDF, and the Mekele Voice of Tigray have close ties to the government. The Government operates the only television station and news is controlled tightly. There are no restrictions on access to international news broadcasts and private satellite receiving dishes; fax machines and modems are permitted. Internet access is provided through the government telecommunications company and is somewhat limited due to lack of capacity in phone lines although this is being improved. Private Internet service providers are required to obtain licences and none had done so by the end of 2000. [25][6][7][25]

**5.70** In 1999 the Government issued a broadcast proclamation announcing the creation of a new broadcasting authority to review applications for private radio and television licences, this authority had not been established by the end of 2000. The proclamation banned political and religious organisations and foreigners from owning stations. The official media are legally autonomous and responsible for part of their revenue production although they still receive Government subsidies. [25]

**5.71** The authorities respect academic freedom, although political activity is not, in general, encouraged in universities. In addition the Government requires that it appoint all deans and the Presidents at all eight public universities. The Ministry of Education has approved the charter for the country's first private university, Unity College, which began offering a bachelors degree program in September 1999. In May 2000 Unity College began offering a two year diploma in journalism and communication. Despite Government assurances that the University would not be affected by the conflict with Eritrea, nine academics of Eritrean origin were dismissed soon after hostilities broke out. Also, at the end of 1998 some 30 out of 82 Eritrean exchange students from the University who had been detained remained in detention at Bilate on the grounds that they had received military training and would be conscripted into the Eritrean armed forces if released. [7][25]

**5.72** On a few occasions during 2000 the police killed and injured students during demonstrations. In particular in December 2000 police shot and killed a student in a demonstration over inadequate school services. [25]

**5.73** On 12 April 2001 police entered the campus of Addis Ababa University to break up a student strike and protests about the banning of their newspaper, the outlawing of student council meetings and the presence on the campus of a police station. Reports indicate that the police were armed with batons and rifles and beat and fired at students about 50 of who were taken to hospital several with severe injuries. The education minister Genet Zewde met with students later and claimed that the Government was not responsible for the actions of the police. She agreed to some of the students' demands however the strike continued. On 17 and 18 April 2001 there were further demonstrations in support of the students, reportedly spreading to other areas of Addis Ababa and the university in Mekele. The demonstrators were mainly high school students and young unemployed men. Riot police reportedly dealt with the disturbances heavy-handedly beating and shooting people and there were reports of 39 deaths and more than 250 injuries. Addis Ababa University was closed indefinitely by the Government but re-opened on 24 April 2001. [14c][4k][5c][4l][4m]

## **FREEDOM OF RELIGION**

**5.74** The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, including the right of conversion. The majority population is fairly evenly divided between the two main religions with about 40% belonging to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Tewahido) and about 45% being Muslims. There are also significant numbers of Evangelical Protestants, and Roman Catholics. It is estimated that 5% to 15% of the population follow animist rights or beliefs. There are more than 6,000 members of Jehovah's Witnesses in the country. In February 1998, despite generally good relations with the Government, Jehovah's Witnesses reported that regional officials in highly Orthodox Christian Tigre national state had disrupted religious services and arrested and briefly detained 50 of their members. In March 1999 Jehovah's Witnesses received a letter of apology from a court in Tigray on account of these actions. Following the outbreak of hostilities with Eritrea in 1998 the Government decided that Jehovah's Witnesses of Eritrean origin, who might face persecution in Eritrea on account of their religious beliefs, would not be subject to deportation to Eritrea. [1][7][25][9]

**5.75** The Government generally respects the Constitutional right to freedom of religion although local authorities have on occasions infringed this right. All religious groups must be registered with the government, although two religions that have reportedly refused to comply with these regulations have suffered no problems. Religious groups with the exception of Jehovah's Witnesses are given free land but are not accorded duty-free status. The imposition of taxes has increased the cost of imported bibles, which has lead to complaints and an interfaith campaign for duty-free status. [25][9]

**5.76** In the past there have been complaints that the police failed to protect Penetecostalists and evangelicals during instances of inter religious conflict however there were no such complaints in 1999 or 2000. The government retains an impartial role of arbiter in any religious disputes. [7][25]

**5.77** The Constitution provides for the separation of church and state and as a result religious instruction is not permitted in schools. Private religious school institutions that cannot teach religion as a course of study, and instead teach morals courses, have been criticised for religious influence by the Government Education Bureau in Addis Ababa. [25][9]

**5.78** A phased emigration of about 27,000 Ethiopian Jews (Falasha) took place during 1984-1991 and in 1999 a further 4,000 were assisted to emigrate to Israel. Only a small number remain in the country. [1]

## **FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

**5.79** The Constitution and the Criminal and Civil Codes prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention. However, these rights are not always respected in practice by the Government. The Criminal Procedure code requires that any person detained must be charged and informed of the charges within 48 hours and, in most cases, be offered release on bail. Persons charged with serious offences may be detained for 15 days while police investigate the case and for further periods of 15 days while investigations continue. Bail is not available to those charged with murder or treason. People are, however, often detained without a warrant, particularly in outlying regions, often not charged within the required 48 hours, and, if bailed, never recalled to appear before a court. At the end of 2000 7,500 people allegedly associated with armed opposition groups remained in detention without charge or trial, mostly suspected OLF supporters or guerrilla fighters, the majority of such detentions being attributable to the shortage and limited training of judges, prosecutors and lawyers. [7][25][9]

**5.80** See sections 5.46 to 5.49 for information on Eritreans in Ethiopia and sections 5.50 to 5.51 for former Dergue supporters and the SPO trials.

**5.81** Judicial search warrants are required to search houses but are seldom obtained outside Addis Ababa. [25]

**5.82** The 1994 Constitution proscribes slavery, which had been formally abolished in 1942, and involuntary servitude. There are no reports of slavery in Ethiopia, although child prostitution involving the sale or abduction of young girls remains a problem and there were continued reports that young girls were sold or forced into prostitution by family members. The Criminal Code prohibits forced labour but courts as a punishment for over-15s can order its use. [7][25][9]

## **FREEDOM TO TRAVEL & INTERNAL RELOCATION (INTERNAL FLIGHT)**

**5.83** The Constitution provides for freedom of travel and residence, both internally and abroad, and allows emigration and repatriation. Exit visas are required but these are issued routinely, except to people with outstanding court cases or unpaid debts. While there are, in theory, no restrictions on where a person may live or work, the Government has restricted the rights of Eritreans and people of Eritrean origin to free travel and movement since the outbreak of hostilities with Eritrea in May 1998. (See sections 5.46-5.49 for full information on Eritreans in Ethiopia) [7][25][9]

**5.84** The law includes provisions for the granting of refuge and asylum in accordance with the provisions of the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. The Government generally treats asylum seekers and refugees fairly and co-operates with the UNHCR in assisting them. Ethiopia has approximately 300,000 refugees mostly from Sudan and Somalia, Government co-operation with the UNHCR continues to provide first asylum to refugees from these countries. The majority are housed in border camps. During 2000 with UNHCR co-operation 4,800 Kenyan refugees and 44,000 Somalis were returned to their countries. [25]

## **PRISON CONDITIONS**

**5.85** Prison conditions in Ethiopia are poor and overcrowding remains a problem. Several prisoners and detainees reportedly died during 1999 from illness and disease, including the acting Secretary-General of the ETA, Shimelis Zewidie, who died in June 1999 from tuberculosis. Although the Constitution prohibits the use of torture and mistreatment of prisoners there are many credible reports of detainees being beaten sometimes by security officials. Following the outbreak of hostilities with Eritrea in May 1998 the Government detained and then deported civilians of Eritrean origin. (See sections 5.46-5.49 for full information on Eritreans in Ethiopia [7][9])

**5.86** The Government permits independent monitoring of prison conditions and police stations by the ICRC and diplomatic missions. The ICRC, in general, had access in 1999 to federal and regional prisons and detention centres and police stations throughout Ethiopia. However, after an ICRC visit in July 1999 the Government refused to allow ICRC access to a Central Investigation Division detention facility in Addis Ababa, but in May 2000 the ICRC was allowed access to this facility. ICRC was also unable to gain access in 1999 to police stations in Addis Ababa holding ethnic Eritrean detainees, but in June 2000 ICRC was permitted access to all police stations in Addis Ababa. ICRC had restricted access in 1999 to military detention facilities where suspected OLF fighters are held. In 2000 the Government allowed ICRC access to detention facilities holding Eritrean POW's, and in addition ICRC regularly visited civilian Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin detained on national security grounds. [7][25]

**5.87** In 1999 and 2000 foreign diplomats were permitted to visit prominent detainees held by the SPO for alleged war crimes committed under the Dergue. These detainees included Olympic marathon winner Mamo Wolde and former President of Addis Ababa University Dr Alemayehu Tefera. Dr Taye Woldesemayat, Secretary-General of the ETA, is also permitted diplomatic visitors. However in 2000 a delegation from the international organisation Education International which had received visas to visit Dr Woldesemayat was turned back at Addis Ababa airport. A second delegation attempted to visit him later in the year and all but one of the delegates was refused visas. [7][25]

**5.88** Prison food is inadequate and many prisoners have food delivered to them by their families or use their own funds to buy food. Prisoners are usually permitted daily access to a prison yard. Female prisoners are housed separately from males and rape does not appear to be a problem. Visitors are allowed. Prison letters are supposed to be written only in Amharic although this restriction is not strictly enforced. [7][25]

**5.89** In June 1999 some 1,200 civilians of Eritrean origin and 172 Eritrean prisoners of war were moved from the Bilate detention camp south of Addis Ababa to the Dedesa camp in the western Oromo state. The new camp is in an area less prone to malaria. In July 1999 some 350 Eritrean POWs were moved to Dedesa from Tigre state. The ICRC and foreign diplomatic observers were allowed regular access to detainees. Following the signing of the peace treaty in December 2000 359 severely wounded or ill POW's were repatriated to Eritrea. [7][25]

# ANNEX A

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1890** - Italy annexes Eritrea on Red Sea coast
- 1896** - Emperor Menelik's forces defeat Italians but Italy retains control of Eritrea
- 1930s** - Emperor Haile Selassie wrests power from old aristocracy and establishes modern autocracy
- 1935** - Italy invades Ethiopia
- 1941** - Allied forces end Italian occupation
- 1952** - Former Italian colony of Eritrea, which had become a UN mandated territory after World War II, federated with Ethiopia
- 1962** - Eritrea formally annexed by Ethiopia
- 1970s** - Increased Eritrean resistance to Ethiopian control by ELF and EPLF
- 9/1974** - Calls for democratisation, army mutinies, Eritrean resistance, economic problems and famine culminate in overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in a military coup. Haile Selassie dies in military custody in 8/1975. The Dergue takes control of Ethiopia and establishes Provisional Military Government (PMG) under Lt-Gen Aman Andom
- 11/1974** - Gen Aman assassinated. 57 former civil and military officials, including two former Prime Ministers executed without trial. Brig-Gen Teferi Benti, Chairman of the Dergue, becomes Head of State. Major (later Lt-Col) Mengistu Haile Mariam one of two Vice-Chairman of the Dergue
- 12/1974** - Dergue declares Ethiopia a socialist state. PMG replaced by Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC)
- 1975** - Col Mengistu emerges as most influential member of the Dergue. PMAC embarks upon 'Ethiopia Tikdem' (Ethiopia First) reforms - nationalisation of land, financial institutions and large firms, literacy drive and establishment of peasant co-operatives. Power struggles within Dergue, continuing into 1976, between supporters of MEISON and EPRP. Joint ELF/EPLF attack almost captures Eritrean capital Asmara. Severe retaliation taken against Eritrea. Tigrean support for Eritrea grows. TPLF formed
- 2/1977** - Col Mengistu assumes control as Head of State and Chairman of PMAC. Gen Teferi Benti and five other Dergue members executed. "Red Terror" campaign launched against Mengistu's political and armed opponents, particularly the EPRP. Tens of thousands killed or tortured
- Mid-1977** - "Red Terror" campaign turns on MEISON. EPRP and MEISON neutralised by end of 1978. Ethiopia under Mengistu moves increasingly closer to Soviet Union

- 1977-78** - TPLF grows stronger with EPLF support, defeating EPRP opponents in Tigre
- 7/1977** - Somalia invades Ethiopia's Ogaden region
- 2/1978** - Ethiopia counter-attacks with large-scale Soviet and Cuban support; Somalia withdraws in 3/1978
- 6/1978** - Large Ethiopian offensive launched in Eritrea; most towns recaptured and EPLF retreats to Nakfa
- 1979** - Mengistu sets up Committee for Organising the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE); all other political groups abolished
- 1981** - Civil war in Eritrea between ELF and EPLF
- 1982** - EPLF, with TPLF allies from Tigre, force ELF into exile in Sudan
- 1984** - Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE) established along Soviet lines with Mengistu as Secretary-General
- 1985-6** - Military successes against TPLF
- 6/1986** - Draft Constitution for eventual return to civilian government published
- 2/1987** - New Constitution endorsed by referendum
- 6/1987** - Elections held for new National Shengo (Assembly). First meeting of Shengo abolishes PMAC and renames country the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) under leadership of WPE; Mengistu elected President of PDRE
- 1988** - Serious military setbacks for Government in Eritrea and Tigre
- 1989** - Government abandons most of Tigre province to TPLF
- 9/1989** - TPLF establishes EPRDF as united front with Amhara-based EPDM. Unsuccessful peace negotiations between Government and EPLF
- 1989-90** - Unpopular 'villagisation' programme leads to fall in agricultural production, exacerbating drought
- 11/1989** - EPRDF forces close in on Addis Ababa
- 2/1990** - EPLF captures Masawa. Peace talks between Government and EPLF broken off
- 3/1990** - Peace talks between Government and TPLF collapse. Socialism effectively abandoned by Mengistu Government; WPE becomes the EDUP and open to non-Marxists. Moves towards market economy begin, but economy close to collapse

- 1/1991** - EPRDF announces moderate, non-Marxist programme, which wins United States support
- 4/1991** - Further gains by EPRDF forces near Addis Ababa. EPLF close in on Assab
- 21.5.1991** - Mengistu flees Ethiopia and goes into exile in Zimbabwe; Vice-President Lt-Gen Tesfaye Gebre Kidan assumes control of Government
- 28.5.1991** - EPRDF forces enter Addis Ababa, with public support of United States; EPRDF establishes interim Government. At the same time EPLF establishes provisional administration in Eritrea, effectively seceding from Ethiopia
- 7/1991** - National conference attended by 20 political and ethnically-based groups establishes Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE); TPLF leader and EPRDF Chairman Meles Zenawi becomes President, with Tamirat Layne Prime Minister. 32 political groups represented on Council of Representatives, including the OLF, which also holds four Ministerial positions on Council of Ministers
- 8/1991** - EPRDF and OLF supporters clash, although OLF remains in TGE
- 11/1991** - 14 new autonomous administrative regions established, broadly reflecting ethnic boundaries
- 1991-2** - Relations between EPRDF and OLF deteriorate; clashes between rival EPRDF and OLF supporters in Oromo region. US and EPLF broker cease-fire between EPRDF and OLF supporters in 4/1992
- 6/1992** - OLF and other groups boycott regional elections. EPRDF and allies win 90% of votes cast. OLF withdraws from TGE and goes into armed opposition. OLF forces capture Asbe Teferi but Government forces retake the town
- 10/1992** - Talks between TGE and OLF unsuccessful; hostilities continue
- 12/1992** - By mid-12/1992 Government holding 20,000 prisoners of war in conflict with OLF
- 1/1993** - Security forces suppress student demonstration in Addis Ababa; one student killed. Government Commission of enquiry, reporting in 1/1994, blames organisers for the disturbances
- 4/1993** - Referendum in Eritrea approves independence from Ethiopia
- 24.5.1993** - Eritrea achieves formal independence, with recognition from Ethiopia
- 7/1993** - Differences emerge within elements of EPRDF over regionalisation and economic reform
- 6/1994** - EPRDF wins large majority of seats in elections to new Constituent Assembly. Polls boycotted by OLF, AAPD and CAFDDE
- 10/1994** - Constituent Assembly inaugurated



**12/1994** - Constituent Assembly approves new Constitution, establishing federal system of government with nine ethnically-based national states and the federal capital territory. Constituent Assembly replaced by bicameral Federal Parliamentary Assembly (FPA), made up of the Council of People's Representatives (CPR) and the Council of the Federation

**12/1994** - Trial of Dergue officials begins, including Mengistu. Trials held by SPO, created in 1992 to investigate and try cases of human rights abuses committed under the Mengistu administration

**5/1995** - Elections to the CPR and national state assemblies, boycotted by most opposition parties, produce landslide win for EPRDF and allies. Largest participating opposition party, the ENDM, fails to win a single seat. Elections deemed to be largely free and fair by international observers

**6/1995** - Pro-EPRDF parties secure narrow victory in Afar and Somali national state elections

**7/1995** - Ethiopian forces make raids into Somalia to attack bases of al-Ittihad al-Islamia terrorists; further raids made 1996-1999

**21.8.1995** - Legislative power transferred to new FPA

**22.8.1995** - TGE wound up as new Constitution becomes effective. Country renamed the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). Dr Negasso Gidada, an ethnic Oromo, elected first President of FDRE by FPA

**23.8.1995** - Meles Zenawi, President under TGE, elected first Prime Minister of FDRE by CPR

**9/1995** - Government launches drive against corruption

**10/1995** - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Tamirat Layne removed from office on suspicion of corruption

**9/1997** - SPO trial of 5,198 accused of genocide and other war crimes committed under Mengistu administration commences at Federal High Court in Addis Ababa

**6.5.1998** - Border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea leads to armed clashes along the border, centred on the Badme area

**5.6.1998** - Eritrea aircraft bomb Mekele in northern Ethiopia, killing 44. Ethiopia launches air attacks on Asmara airport in Eritrea

**15.6.1998** - Ethiopia and Eritrea accept a US-brokered agreement to halt air-strikes against each other

**12/1998** - AAPO Chairman Professor Asrat Woldeyes released from prison and leaves Ethiopia for USA for medical treatment

**2/1999** - Resumption of heavy fighting in border dispute with Eritrea; Ethiopian aircraft and helicopters used in violation of moratorium on air strikes agreed in 6/1998

**4/2000** - Ethiopia and Eritrea agree to attend peace talks in Algiers

**5/2000** - Ethiopia launches all-out offensive against Eritrea to recapture land occupied by Eritrea since 5/1998; Ethiopia recaptures all occupied land by end 5/2000

**5/2000** - Ruling EPRDF coalition wins national elections but loses ground to opposition parties and independents in some regional elections

**18.6.2000** - Ethiopia and Eritrea sign cease-fire agreement; Eritrea agrees to UN border monitoring force within its territory

**10/2000** - Ethiopia and Eritrea agree to further talks in Algiers aimed at resolving border dispute and making 6/2000 cease-fire permanent

**12.12.2000** - Ethiopia and Eritrea sign peace agreement ending border war, which establishes commissions to mark the border exchange prisoners, return displaced people and hear compensation claims.

# ANNEX B

## MAIN POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS

- **Abugda Ethiopian Democratic Congress** - ethnic-based organisation seeking self-determination
- **Afar People's Democratic Organization (APDO)** - formerly the Afar Liberation Front, supports the EPRDF. Runs Afar military force set up in 1996 to combat attacks by ARDUF. Leader Ali Mirah
- **Afar Revolutionary Democratic Unity Front (ARDUF)** - armed opposition group seeking self-determination for the Afar people, in on-going negotiations with Federal Government
- **Al-Ittihad al-Islamia (Islamic Union Party)** - Somalia-based armed opposition group seeking self-determination for the Somali-populated Ogaden district
- **All-Amhara People's Organization (AAPO)** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination for the Amhara people. Former Chairman Professor Asrat Woldeyes, imprisoned 1994 to 12/1998, died in USA 5/1999
- **All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement (MEISON)** - see **COEDF**
- **Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM)** - formed as the EPDM by the TPLF to campaign in Amhara-populated areas, re-named the ANDM in 1/1994. Formed the EPRDF with the TPLF in 9/1989. Secretary-General Deputy Prime Minister Tefera Walwa
- **Burji People's Democratic Organization** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination
- **Coalition of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia (CAFPDE)** - formed 1993, broadly-based coalition of groups opposed to the EPRDF. Granted official registration 7/1996. EPRDF pressure and influence over the media, as well as CAFPDE's own divisions, have limited the group's impact. Chairman Dr Beyene Petros (also Chairman of SEPDU)
- **Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces (COEDF)** - formed 1991 in USA by the EPRP with a faction of the EDU and MEISON, opposed to the EPRDF. Chairman Mersha Yoseph
- **Committee for Organising the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE)** - set up by Mengistu in 1979, precursor of the WPE
- **Daworo People's Democratic Movement** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination
- **Democratic Unity Party** - opposed to EPRDF. Chairman Ahmad Abd al-Karim
- **Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF)** - fought in alliance with TPLF/EPRDF against Mengistu Government, formed provisional administration of Eritrea 5/1991 and Government of independent Eritrea 5/1993

- **Ethiopian Democratic Action Group** - Chairman Ephrem Zemikael
- **Ethiopian Democratic Organization** - see **ENDP**
- **Ethiopian Democratic Organization Coalition** - see **ENDP**
- **Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU)** - see **COEDF**
- **Ethiopian Democratic Unity Party (EDUP)** - replaced the WPE in 3/1990 and abandoned the WPE's reliance on Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the sole legal party until 5/1991. Secretary-General Lt-Gen Tesfaye Gebre Kidan
- **Ethiopian Medhin Democratic Party (MEDHIN)** - group that does not recognise EPRDF-led Government as a legitimate authority and therefore cannot participate in the normal political process. Leader Colonel Goshu Wolde
- **Ethiopian National Democratic Movement (ENDM)** - largest opposition group to participate in 5/1995 CPR & National State elections, failing to win a single seat
- **Ethiopian National Democratic Organization** - opposed to EPRDF
- **Ethiopian National Democratic Party (ENDP)** - formed 1994 by the merger of five pro-Government organisations with members in the Council of Representatives: the Ethiopian Democratic Organization, the Ethiopian Democratic Organization Coalition, the Gurage People's Democratic Front, the Kembata People's Congress and the Wolaita People's Democratic Front. Chairman Fekadu Gedamu
- **Ethiopian National Patriotic Front (ENPF)** - Amhara-based opposition group accused by the Government of involvement in terrorist acts (see Sections 3.40 & 5.35)
- **Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM)** - see **ANDM**
- **Ethiopian People's Democratic Unity Organization** - opposed to EPRDF. Leader Tadesse Tilahun
- **Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)** - formed 9/1989 by the TPLF as an alliance of anti-Mengistu/WPE groups. Ousted Mengistu Government 5/1991 in alliance with EPLF. Dominant party in the TGE from 7/1991 onwards. Present governing party of the FDRE. Leader Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. The EPRDF comprises the TPLF, the ANDM and the OPDO
- **Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP)** - see **COEDF**
- **Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL)** - formed 1994 by the merger of 11 Ethiopian Somali organisations. Merged with other Somali groups 6/1998 to form the Somali Democratic Party (SDP) - see **SDP**
- **Gedeo People's Democratic Organization** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination. Leader Alesa Mengesha
- **Gurage People's Democratic Front** - see **ENDP**

- **Hadia People's Democratic Organization** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination
- **Harer National League** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination
- **Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia** - see **UOLF**
- **Islamic Unity Party** - see **al-Ittihad al-Islamia**
- **Jarso Democratic Movement** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination
- **Kaffa People's Democratic Union** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination
- **Kefa People's Democratic Movement** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination
- **Kembata People's Congress** - see **ENDP**
- **MEDHIN** - see Ethiopian Medhin Democratic Party
- **MEISON** - see All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement
- **Moa Ambessa Party** - opposed to EPRDF, monarchist party
- **National Democratic Union** - opposed to EPRDF
- **Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF)** - Somali organisation, elements of which are in armed opposition to the Government and, from 7/1996, in alliance with the OLF; other elements merged with the ESDL to form the SDP
- **Oromo Abo Libe ration Front (OALF)** - Oromo organisation operating in coalition with OPDO and UOLF. Chairman Mohammed Sirage
- **Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)** - became active in the 1980s, participated in the TGE until 6/1992, since when it has been in armed opposition to the TGE and the EPRDF-led Government of the FDRE. In alliance with armed wing of the ONLF from 7/1996. Secretary-General Gelassa Dilbo, Vice Secretary-General Lencho Letta
- **Oromo National Congress** - see section 5.30
- **Oromo People's Democratic Organisation(OPDO)** - formed 1990 by the TPLF to campaign in Oromo areas, opposed to the OLF. Part of the EPRDF alliance. Operates in coalition with OALF and UOLF. Deputy Secretary-General Kuma Demeksa. The OPDO's Dr Negasso Gidada has been President of the FDRE since 8/1995
- **Oromo People's Liberation Front** - see **UOLF**
- **Sidama Liberation Movement** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination

- **Somali Abo Liberation Front (SALF)** - operates in the Bale district of the Somali National State, received military assistance from Somalia in the mid-1980s. Secretary-General Masurad Shu'abi Ibrahim
- **Somali Democratic Party (SDP)** - formed 6/1998 by merger of the ESDL and elements of the ONLF. Leader Dr Abd-al Majid Husayn, Federal Transport and Communications Minister
- **Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Union (SEPDU)** - alliance formed 1992 by 10 ethnically-based political groups in southern Ethiopia, represented in the Council of Representatives, although 5 of the 10 groups were expelled from the Council in 4/1993. Chairman Dr Beyene Petros (also Chairman of CAFPDE)
- **Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF)** - formed 1975 to fight for independence of Tigre province. Dominant group within the EPRDF, formed in 1989. Leader Prime Minister Meles Zenawi
- **United Oromo Liberation Front (UOLF)** - formed 1995 by merger of Oromo People's Liberation Front and Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia. Operates in coalition with OALF and OPDO. Chairman Ahmad Muhammad Saro
- **Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF)** - invaded Ogaden district with Somalian Government backing in 1977, defeated in 1978. Maintains guerrilla force in Ogaden. Secretary-General Issa Shaykh Abdi Nasir Adan
- **Wolaita People's Democratic Front** - see **ENDP**
- **Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE)** - formed 1984 by Mengistu, renamed the EDUP in 3/1990, the sole legal party until 5/1991
- **Yem Nationality Movement** - ethnic-based group seeking self-determination

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# ANNEX C

## PROMINENT PEOPLE PAST & PRESENT

- Lt-Col Atnafu **Abate** - Vice-Chairman of the Dergue, along with Col Mengistu, 1974
- Muhammad Ma'lim **Ali** - Vice-Chairman of the Somali Democratic Party (SDP) and President of the Somali National State 1998
- Lt-Gen Aman Andom (General **Aman**) - Head of State and Chairman of the Dergue 9/1974, assassinated 11/1974
- Professor **Asrat** Woldeyes, Chairman of the AAPD, held in prison from 1994 to 12/1998 when he left Ethiopia for the USA for medical treatment, died in USA 5/1999, buried in Addis Ababa 6/1999
- Brig-Gen Teferi **Benti** - replaced General Aman as Chairman of the Dergue and Head of State 11/1974, executed by Mengistu 2/1977
- Dr **Beyene** Petros - Chairman of CAFPDE
- Ambassador Muhammad **Dirir** - Secretary of the SDP 1998
- **Fekadu** Gedamu - Chairman of the ENDP
- **Gelassa** Dilbo - Secretary-General of the OLF
- Dr Abd-al Majid **Husayn** - Chairman of the SDP and Federal Transport and Communications Minister 1998
- Tamirat **Layne** - Vice-Chairman of the EPRDF, Chairman of the ANDM, Prime Minister of Ethiopia 7/1991, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia 8-10/1995. Removed from office 10/1995; tried on corruption charges found guilty in February 2000 and sentenced to 18 years imprisonment.
- **Lencho** Letta - Vice Secretary-General of the OLF
- **Meles** Zenawi - TPLF leader and Chairman of the EPRDF, President of Ethiopia 7/1991-8/1995, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 8/1995 to the present
- Emperor **Menelik** - modernising and unifying ruler in late nineteenth century, died 1911. Founded Addis Ababa in the late 1880s, defeated the Italians in 1896
- Lt-Col Mengistu Haile Mariam (Col **Mengistu**) - doctrinaire Marxist who assumed power 2/1977, Secretary-General of the WPE from 1984, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia from 1987 until he fled in 5/1991; lives in exile in Zimbabwe
- **Mersha** Yoseph - Chairman of COEDF

- Ali **Mirah** - leader of the APDO
- Dr **Negasso** Gidada - President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 8/1995 to the present, ethnic Oromo, member of the EPRDF-allied OPDO
- Emperor Haile **Selassie** - Regent 1916, King 1928, Emperor from 1930 until deposed in 1974, died in military custody 1975
- Dr **Taye** Woldesemayat - Secretary-General of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association, arrested 8/1996 and held in detention since, charged with involvement in terrorist acts allegedly committed by the ENPF
- **Tefera** Walwa - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the FDRE since 10/1995, Secretary-General of the EPRDF-allied ANDM
- Lt-Gen **Tesfaye** Gebre Kidan - Vice-President under Mengistu who briefly assumed control of the PDRE after Mengistu fled Ethiopia in 5/1991; Secretary-General of the EDUP

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