



# Finote Ethio-Canadian Information Centre In Toronto

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1910 Kennedy Rd. unit 3 Toronto On. M1P 2L8 P.O.Box 417 E-mail: [torontofinote@gmail.com](mailto:torontofinote@gmail.com)



April 3, 2020

**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**  
**Palais des Nations**  
**CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland**

**Dear Sir / Madam**

**Re: Kidnapping of 17 Denbi Dollo university students in Ethiopia**

## **Preamble**

Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Adopted by General Assembly resolution 47/133 of 18 December 1992) proclaims the declaration on the protection of all persons from enforced disappearance. Moreover, *enforced disappearance is defined in **Article 2 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance** which the UN General Assembly adopted in December 2006, as: the arrest, detention, abduction, or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the state or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support, or acquiescence of the state, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of the law.* This declaration depicts the following that urges all states to accept it:

## **Article 1**

- Any act of enforced disappearance is an offence to human dignity. It is condemned as a denial of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and as a grave and flagrant violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and reaffirmed and developed in international instruments in this field.
- Any act of enforced disappearance places the persons subjected thereto outside the protection of the law and inflicts severe suffering on them and their families. It constitutes a violation of the rules of international law guaranteeing, inter alia , the right to recognition as a person before the law, the right to liberty and security of the person and the right not to be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. It also violates or constitutes a grave threat to the right to life.

## **Article 2**

- No State shall practice, permit or tolerate **enforced disappearances**.
- States shall act at the national and regional levels and in cooperation with the United Nations to contribute by all means to the prevention and eradication of enforced disappearance.

**Where are the seventeen young, vibrant, dynamic students of Dembi Dollo university?**

Enforced disappearance is frequently used as a strategy to spread terror within society and this is what the current state is executing against innocent people. The feeling of insecurity and fear it generates is not limited to the close relatives of the disappeared, but also affects communities and society as a whole. Family and friends of people who have disappeared experience slow mental anguish. Not knowing whether their son or daughter, mother or father is still alive. Not knowing where he or she is being held, or how they are being treated. Searching for the truth may put the whole family in great danger. Not knowing if their loved one will ever return often leaves their relatives living in limbo.

The Noble prize winner-Abiy government doesn't follow the above standards promulgated in the 1992 UN General Assembly's Declaration on Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances as it happened recently to seventeen young University students. These disappeared students are also at a high risk of torture since they are placed completely outside the protection of the law. They can be also at heightened risk of other human rights violations, such as sexual violence or even murder.

**The names of the seventeen Dembi Dollo University students are as follows.**

Lists	First names with last names	Gender	Faculty & programs of study	Relatives contact numbers
1	Belaynesh Mekonen Demeilew	F	Agro Economics 1st year	+251977609506
2	Sirgut Gettie Tibebu	F	Natural science 1st year	+251975597403
3	Tenalem Mulatie Kebede	F	Agro Economics 2ndYear	+251913155336
4	Samrawit Kere Asrese	F	Journalism 2nd year	+251918081082
5	Tigist Mesay Mezgeb	F		+251919521657
6	Eskalehu Chekol Tegegn	F	Chemistry 3rd year	+251911945372
7	Kidanie Girmaw Fetene	F	+251955197809	+251955197809
8	Zewdie Girmaw Fetene	F	Agro Economics 3rd	+251955197809
9	Meseret Kefyalew Molla	F	Natural science 3rd year	+251921525702
10	Asabie Ayele Alem	F	Plant science 3rd year	+251965310551
11	Mulu Zewdie Adanne	F	Sociology 2nd year	+251910477101
12	Zemed Birhan Dessie	F	Natural science 3rd year	+251900211182
13	Bitewelegn Atinafu Alemu	F	Computer science 3rd year	+251986818970
14	Monamen Belay Abebe	F	Journalism 2nd year	+251923228066
15	Attalelegn Getnet Derese	M	Natural science 1st year	+251937698760
16	Girmachew Yenenneh Adugna	M	Biotechnology 3rd year	+251955197809
17	Girmaw Habtie Emegnew	M	Mechanical Engineering 3rd year	+251918027436

*Please, click the video clip as parents are witnessing the disappearances and the agony they are going through!*

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51411720>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aN087y52EHc>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICbrOmEfyKI>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmYH4YCjPKs>



***Some of the portrait of the captives. Where are they?***

The seventeen Dembi Dollo university students (girls and boys) have been missing for more than hundred ten days. We ask the international communities of human right organizations: When will you condemn the kidnapping? When will you denounce terror attacks against innocent civilians? When will you take action to ensure our teens return home safely? **The parents of the teens are witnessing the disappearances, this testimonial outcry is depicted and attached to this letter.** *"Our children are abducted by one thing: impunity....teen's abductors' knew that the likelihood of them being found was very remote"* – father and mother of students, [disappeared 100 years ago].

Notwithstanding, on March 25, 2020, Amnesty International requested for help the Ethiopian authorities to disclose measures they had taken to rescue these abducted students, given the history of ethnic cleansing, the death of 86 Ethiopians, zenithal internal displacement, and the execution of young Shashemene individual by out-of-date hanging ( in the day light), **Colonel Abiy Ahemed Ali's** mono-ethnic regime kept the ball rolling in violating and infringing international human right protection. Moreover, Amnesty International had authenticated when it contacted several families of the missing students who displayed mounting trepidation and impuissance as their children remain nowhere to be found.

*Impunity, State negligence in preventing disappearances, and flawed investigations are the issues parents refer to as being one of the major contributing factors to the disappearances of their loved ones. The failure of the authorities to identify, detain and bring to justice those responsible for the forced disappearance of boys and girls, sends the message to perpetrators that they will not be held accountable for their actions.*

***We call on the Human Rights Watch (HRW), to immediately and unequivocally condemn the kidnapping. It must also call on Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to disarm the military wing of OLF (Oromo Liberation Front); halt the massive internal displacement of non-Oromo ethnics ; and stop the killing of innocent citizens by the Federal polices, and allow the right of movement of citizens from place to place within the country. These repugnant interethnic conflict and crime against humanity must stop. Moreover, we call on all those with the means to come on board to stop violations and return our young, dynamic, students unharmed (without maiming as well as sexually abusing our innocent teens) and -immediately and unconditionally.***

We should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Asseged Seyoum



Signature

Chair, Secretary

Finote Ethio-Canadian Information Center in Toronto (FECICT)

CC,The Human Rights Action Center (HRAC)

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

World Council of Churches (WCC)