

## **Washington Update - April 25, 2020**

The Ethiopian government is using the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to crackdown on legal opposition activities. Their hope is that the U.S. and the rest of the world are too distracted to notice or respond.

The latest outrage is the arrest by Ethiopian security of Eskinder Nega, journalist, the internationally respected human rights and democracy activist. His only “crime” was speaking on behalf of voiceless Ethiopians who have been dislocated from their homes.

Eskinder Nega has been released on bail, but he shouldn't have been arrested in the first place. He is still under threat, and the risks are even more serious for other opposition figures who are less prominent.

The US Congress and President Trump administration must pay close attention to how the Ethiopian government is violating the human rights of its own people. The coronavirus pandemic cannot be a shield for violating human rights. The Prime Minister must focus on stabilizing the country, including halting the ongoing persecution of Amhara people that includes beatings and forced dislocation. He must condemn this barbaric behavior.

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