

**THREAT TO SIDAMA NATION'S EXISTANCE IN THEIR LAND
MATERIALISE;
90 Sidama Families evicted from their houses by TPLF, Sidama**

March 8, 2004

Commentator,

Reporter from Awassa city has uncovered that more than 90 Sidama families made to leave their houses with their families forcefully on February 24, 2004. The Sidamas who had had lived in and around Awassa, (in their ancestral land) for several centuries forced by TPLF's Special forces established to dismantle the Sidama people houses and give their land to others by the name of investment. This, a pre-planned program said to be continuing against the Sidama nation under the pretext of investment.

According to the same eye witness from Awassa city, 'Gezahegn Abera' who is internationally known marathoner is said to have been given the Sidama land to run his own business at the expense of Sidamas' suffering. The families of helpless and voiceless Sidamas who were residents of Awassa vicinity which is a part of former higher 2/04 are left homeless with their children and wives and begging on the streets.

Some of the victims of the said eviction, who have asked why they were removed from their houses and land, have been put in jail since February 24, 2004. From those who were arrested simply because they have asked their basic human rights were said to have been treated inhumanely. The source added that, specially prepared security forces of Meles Zenawi to intimidate the Sidamas; who have taken them prisoners from their locality to prison made the Sidama prisoners, in particular 9 of them, to lie and roll on the Asphalt road naked at 1 o'clock local time while the temperature was above 40 degree centigrade (meaning; the asphalt would be able to roast a meat if left for more than an hour), were tortured for hours. All Sidama prisoners were said to have been taken to their cells unconscious.

People who have seen such evil act against the Sidama people said that, the act was more serious and heinous than that of former South African Apartheid. The witnesses who were bypassing on bus from Negele Borena (one of the southern Oromia city) have been amazed why the Sidama people in particular made to suffer in such a way undercover. Those concerned people who were bypassing have made an issue of human rights agenda and local news-papers are said to have uncovered this reality.

Where the Sidamas don't have anywhere to appeal or to go other than their ancestor's land, their suffering is becoming utterly intolerable. International community kept silent despite continued appeal. Sadly, the cruel and deceitful leader of TPLF (Meles Zenawi) is made one of Tony Blair's 'African Commission' on the same day while the Sidamas are suffering the consequences of his cruel and inhuman policy of eviction. Day to day killings of the Sidamas in different parts of 10 Sidama districts in addition to repression became a part of their lives. The Sidamas, inauspiciously, are incapacitated from all angles. No one represent Sidamas (the third populous nations') interest at present. All who are put on power virtually echo the voices of ruling regime, not at all the Sidamas according to the same source.

The same reporter said that the Sidamas are strongly condemning such hideous act against the human rights of the Sidama people. And they are begging international community, in particular, Tony Blair and George W Bush to stop their support of the TPLF's regime who is terrorizing his own citizens under impregnable political system and to act as soon as possible to emancipate the Sidama nation from continued repression and cruel act of TPLF's regime.

March 8, 2004, Commentator from Awassa, Sidama