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CONDITION OF ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES WORSENS IN THE SUDAN

More or less ignored by the UNHCR that was supposed to assure their protection, Ethiopian refugees in the Sudan are facing grave dangers and difficulties. Already, more than thousand of them languish in Kober and other Sudanese prisons without due process or legal protection. Dozens have been forcefully deported back to Ethiopia and jailed, disappeared or killed (deported elder Major Atanaw Wassie died under custody denied any medical care).

Omar Beshir and Meles Zenawi are political allies and this has meant that the security agents of Meles Zenawi have free reign in the Sudan to worsen the conditions of refugees, to harass political dissidents, to organize deportation and to try to gain political support by duress. The Sudanese government cancelled the refugee status of the Ethiopians, started registering again, cancelled the registration arbitrarily and termed the refugees "illegals", harasses the refugees routinely and has left the refugees in a state of limbo and fear. The UNHCR has been proven of little or no use as in Yemen and Djibouti. Added to the refugees' plight is the fact that resettlement in other countries has been almost totally closed.

SOCEPP once again calls on the UNHCR to protect the refugees in the Sudan and calls on other countries to facilitate the resettlement of the Ethiopian refugees (some of them in the Sudan even prior to the 1991 takeover of power by the Meles group) in third countries.

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