

The Honorable Lawrence Cannon  
Minister of Foreign Affairs Canada  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Dear Mr. Cannon,

As a chairperson of the Eritrean-Canadians Human Rights Group in Manitoba, it is my duty to bring to your attention the plight of 200 Eritrean detainees facing deportation in Libya.

Over the past decade Eritrean youth have been fleeing the country to escape the horrific oppression and endless conscription. Thousands of them live in the refugee camps of Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Egypt and Kenya. What deeply concerns us now is the plight of Eritrean refugees currently detained in Libya. They have never been charged in court and about 200 of them are facing impending deportation to Eritrea. If they are deported they will in all probability be jailed, these are horrifying places not at all like our jails in Canada. In jail many will be tortured and die as the former Eritrean deportees of 2007 experienced.

According to, *Human Rights Concern Eritrea*, based in the United Kingdom, Eritrean detainees held in the prison in Gruble-2Prison, Surinam, Zawya and Zelten, are being coerced into filling out forms provided by the Eritrean Embassy in Tripoli that will lead to certain identification and deportation. When they refuse they face torture including electric shock. Because the Libyan and Eritrean government, are in collusion the detainees rights have been revoked and they are forsaken

The Libyan government's obligations in relation to torture, ill treatment and deportation are clear. Under the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights, the United Nations Convention Against Torture, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, torture and ill treatment are prohibited and no person can be deported to a country where he or she is at such risk. This applies to all persons without consideration of their

status or alleged crimes, and irrespective of the nature of the transfer, including extradition, expulsion, deportation and rendition.

Canada is one of the leading countries in advocating basic human rights. We must act to prohibit the deportation of Eritrean detainees from Libya.

As Eritrean Canadians, we ask you to raise this matter with the Libyan Foreign Minister and:

- Demand an urgent meeting concerning Eritrean detainees in Libya to stop the process of deportation immediately.
- Ensure that Libya abides by the United Nation Convention on the rights of refugees and detainees to end the ill treatment.
- Provide the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR with immediate access to the detainees, to monitor their well being.

Please let me know if you require any additional information. I anticipate your prompt reply to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Ghezae Hagos Berhe

Chairperson: Eritrean-Canadians Human Rights Group in Manitoba

I can also be contacted at:

Ghezae Hagos Berhe  
In-Canada Protection Counsellor  
Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council (MIIC)  
Welcome Place, 397 Carlton St., Winnipeg, MB, R3B 2K9.  
Tel: 204-977-1000/264  
Fax: 204-956-7548  
Email: [ghezaeb@miic.ca](mailto:ghezaeb@miic.ca) Internet: [www.miic.ca](http://www.miic.ca)