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جبهة التحرير العريترية
المجلس الثوري
مكتب الرئيس

Eritrean Liberation Front – RC
Chairman's Office

An Appeal to UN Secretary-General
On Behalf of Eritreans under
Imminent Threat of Deportation
Back to Isaias Afwerki's Killing Fields

UN SG Ban Ki-moon, New York, Ki-moon@un.org, Ki-moonB@un.org

Your Excellency Mr. Ki-moon,

At the very moment of writing of this appeal, over one thousand Eritrean asylum seekers are under an imminent threat of forced return to Eritrea from countries in Africa and the Middle East in blatant violation of international undertakings governing refugees and persecuted asylum seekers. This appeal is addressed to you, Sir, on behalf of a large number of members and supporters of the ELF-RC, a major Eritrean opposition organization struggling to bring about change and democratization in distressed Eritrea.

This is an urgent call to save lives because, if deported, the Eritreans will face what other compatriots deported from Malta and Libya in 2002 and 2004 faced: extreme form of maltreatment, torture, disappearance and death under various circumstances. It concerns the lives of over 1,000 asylum seekers reportedly under threat of likely deportation to Eritrea from Israel, Libya and even from fraternal Sudan (if the feared reports are to happen).

The international media just reported that **299** Eritrean asylum seekers are detained in five Israeli prisons and that Israel is intending to deport them to Eritrea or push them back to Egypt for a similar fate. The detainees in Israel, most of whom are youth below the age of 30, include children and pregnant women. Recent reports are that Israel has opened its doors to refugees from Darfur but refuses to accept asylum seekers from Eritrea.

Latest media reports also inform that about **500** Eritrean asylum seekers in the Sudan were rounded up since 12 July 2007 in Khartoum following weeks of demonstrations in front of the UN offices in the Sudanese capital asking for UN attention and action for themselves and other thousands of persecuted and displaced Eritreans in the region and beyond. We are now very much concerned because reliable international bodies are reporting about "well-founded fears" of

possible deportation from the Sudan to Eritrea on the basis of recent rapprochement reached between the two countries.

The UNHCR is also well aware about the detention in one Libyan prison alone of **450** Eritrean asylum seekers. Other **53** Eritreans who disappeared in the Mediterranean Sea last May were later on reported to have been saved by Libyan patrol boats that led them direct to a secret detention camp in the Zuwarah area near Tripoli for possible deportation without the knowledge of the UNHCR and other concerned world bodies.

Mr. Ban Ki-moon,

We are talking about lives in imminent danger. It is an open secret to the world today that the regime in Eritrea has turned the country into an African version of Killing Fields. Therefore, deportation of any Eritrean asylum seeker, Mr. Secretary General, is an outright death sentence in the hands of the callous regime that already proven itself to be a regime in whose hands prison inmates have little chance to survive the ordeal of torture and maltreatment.

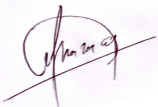
As we had reminded your predecessor, Mr. Kofi Annan, not long ago, our fears and the fears of humanitarian bodies are compounded by sad precedents of what happened to 110 young Eritreans deported from Libya on 21 July 2004, and before them other 232 asylum seekers deported from Malta in 2002.

Sir,

The human condition and the humanitarian rights situation in Eritrea is appalling, to say the least. The fate of those who are forced to return after their attempt to flee the country is simply bad news to their families, to us Eritreans as well as to the international humanitarian community at large.

Therefore, this modest appeal wishes to draw your attention to the plight of Eritreans under the threat of deportation at this moment in time and request your urgent action to avert the plans.

Respectfully yours,



Woldeyesus Ammar,
Chairman, ELF-RC
19.07.2007

Copies to:

CC: UN Deputy SG Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, Migiro@un.org, Migiroa@un.org

CC: Spokeswoman Michele Montas, Montas@un.org, MontasM@un.org

CC: Mr. Antonio GUTERRES, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva (GUTERRES@unhcr.org)

CC: Ms. Louise ARBOUR, High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), Geneva (ARBOUR@unhchr.org, Larbour@unhchr.org, webadmin.hchr@unog.ch).

CC. To Eritrean websites