



Eritrea-Watch

For Human Rights and Democracy

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PRESS RELEASE

ABUSE IN RELIGION; ABUSE IN BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

In Eritrea in the sub zone Segeneiti, five religious (Catholic) priests were ordered to serve a military national service by the administration office of the sub zone.

Human rights activist, Eritrean Watch for Human Rights & Democracy (EWHRD) has enquired that the priests of Segeneiti, Hebo, Akrur, Ade Angefom and Degra are ordered to serve military service in Sawa military camp.

Eritrea-Watch (EWHRD) has confirmed that this abuse in religious elders' in Subzone Segeneity started when they conducted mourning for the tragedy happened in Mediterranean Sea that killed around 400 Eritreans. The mourning was held in 27/04/2011 in the town of Segeneiti Catholic Church.

After the Mourning, around 120 habitants of Segeneiti took an initiative to appeal to the administration of the Segeneiti subzone; to express their worries if the priests are going to military service there will be no one to take care of the church performance and duties.

As they walked out of the Church (at around 400 meters) towards the administration office of the town, police rounded them up and took them all to Forto Segeneiti and held them as prisoners. Among the detainees old men and women are found. Some of them are up to 90 years old.

Around 21:00h, 50 elderly 3 women among them were taken to police headquarters of Segeneyti. Some of them were told they are free to go

home. But they protested and refused to be freed unless the rest of the detainees are not freed. They are still held as prisoners.

Human rights activists Eritrean Watch for Human Rights & Democracy strive against such inhuman and undemocratic acts:-

1. Strongly condemn the government of Eritrea for politicalizing religious activities and services, and strongly demand to stop the abuse freedom of religion of both Christians and Muslims.
2. Cruelty on Bishop Marcos is clear evidence that the government of Eritrea is abusing the freedom of religion. Up to date there are thousands of Eritreans languishing in prison just because of their belief. We demand the government of Eritrea to release immediately all prisoners of religion and give back all their property that was confiscated.
3. The right to practice spiritual belief is basic human rights. Religious leaders of Eritrea should be free to practice and perform religious duties to the people of Eritrea. Forced military service for religious leaders should automatically stop.
4. The measure taken by the administration of Segeneyti sub zone is a complete abuse of human rights. Therefore the 120 people who were taken to prison should be released immediately.
5. Both Christian and Muslim believers in Eritrea have been incarcerated, harassed, abducted and properties taken. Here by we call all concerned Eritreans to stand against abuse of freedom of religion in Eritrea.
6. We call the international community, international human rights activists, religious institutions and everyone who stands for justice to demand the government of Eritrea to respect freedom of Religion.

FREEDOM OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS SHOULD BE RESPECTED.

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