

**Ethiopia's Compliance with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
Suggested List of Issues**

Submitted by The Advocates for Human Rights

a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1996

**75th Session of the Committee Against Torture
31 October 2022 – 25 November 2022**

Submitted 13 June 2022

The Advocates for Human Rights (The Advocates) is a volunteer-based non-governmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law. Established in 1983, The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the United States and around the world, including monitoring and fact finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publications. The Advocates is also the primary provider of legal services to low-income asylum seekers in the Upper Midwest region of the United States and numerous survivors of human rights abuses in Ethiopia have requested legal assistance from The Advocates. First-hand information from asylum-seekers about the human rights violations that they experienced in Ethiopia since the last review of Ethiopia in 2011 has been used with their permission in this submission. The Advocates has worked extensively in collaboration with members of the Ethiopian diaspora, both for purposes of documenting human rights conditions in Ethiopia and in the context of asylum and other immigration proceedings.

Ethiopia fails to uphold its obligations under the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

I. The State Party continues the widespread use of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Widespread use of torture (Concluding Observations para. 10)

1. In its 2011 Concluding Observations, CAT noted the numerous, ongoing and consistent allegations concerning the routine use of torture by state agents, particularly against political dissidents and opposition party members.¹ The Committee expressed concern that such acts frequently occur with the participation, at the instigation or with the consent of commanding officers.²
2. The State Party reported promulgating legislation that criminalized acts amounting to torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatments. The State Party also acknowledged the use of torture by its security forces, reporting that, "...the Ethiopian Prime Minister publicly admitted, apologised for and condemned the practice and [...] proceeded to hold to account perpetrators [...]"³. Ethiopia did not provide information about the nature of procedures for accountability and remedy for these victims.
3. Despite these statements, human rights organizations have documented torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment by Ethiopian Defense Force soldiers in detention.⁴ The Advocates has also received firsthand information from individual clients who have been forced to flee torture and human rights violations in Ethiopia and seek asylum in the United States. Many Tigrayan clients of The Advocates have denounced the systemic practices of torture they have suffered by state forces.⁵ Clients have reported being subject to beatings, isolation, sleep deprivation, and threats by State agents while interrogating them.⁶ In most cases, the State agents reportedly sought to get information or connect the clients to the Tigray People's Liberation group. Clients' relatives living outside of the Tigray region asserted having a constant fear of being attacked when leaving their houses.⁷
4. One client reported that State authorities interrogated him about his job and his boss. During these interrogations, officers beat the client on his head and legs with nightsticks. The detention lasted for one week. After the officers released the client, three men who were not in uniform

¹ Committee against Torture, *Concluding observations on the initial periodic report of Ethiopia, adopted by the Committee at its 974th and 975th Session* (1-19 November 2010), 20 January 2011, U.N. Doc CAT/C/ETH/CAT/C/ETH/CO/1 ¶ 10.

² Ibid.

³ Committee against Torture, *Second periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 19 of the Convention, due in 2014*, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/ETH/2, ¶ 87. See Human Rights Watch, "See Human Rights Watch, "World Report 2019: Ethiopia: Events of 2018," accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/ethiopia>.

⁴ Amnesty International, *Beyond Law Enforcement: Human Rights Violations by Ethiopian Security Forces in Amhara and Oromia*, AFR 25/2358/2020, 26–27, May 29, 2020.

⁵ Interview by the Advocates (2022).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

came to his house, broke down the door, and began to beat him. According to the client, the authorities accused him of organizing Tigrayans to protest against the government. Authorities detained him without food or water and beat him every day until he was released after three days.⁸

5. Human rights organizations have also documented that women are victims of rape and sexual violence in detention.⁹ One client reported that police arrested her and her husband at a protest and detained them without charge. Authorities accused the client of not supporting the government, supporting opposition parties, and instigating opposition to the government. According to the client, guards repeatedly interrogated and abused her, shaved her head to cause self-hatred, and raped and beat women of all ages.¹⁰

II. The State Party fails to adequately investigate and prosecute acts of torture.

Impunity for acts of torture and ill-treatment (para. 11)

6. In its Concluding Observations, the Committee urged Ethiopia to take immediate and effective measures to investigate, prosecute and punish all acts of torture and to ensure that torture is not used by law enforcement personnel -the police, prison officers, and members of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF).¹¹
7. The Committee expressed concern about the lack of a complaint mechanism for receiving complaints and conducting prompt and impartial investigations. The Government of Ethiopia was advised to prosecute perpetrators without being undertaken by or under the authority of the police or military.¹² The Committee also regretted “the lack of information on civil court decisions awarding compensation to victims of torture and ill-treatment, or their families, and on the amounts awarded in such cases.”¹³
8. Ethiopia reported a draft regulation upon the Federal Police Proclamation that provides that police officers are subject to disciplinary measures in case of torture acts.¹⁴ The State Party Report, however, fails to provide information about investigations, sanctions, and specific measures to protect prisoners and detainees.

⁸ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2015-2022). The case information mentioned throughout this report has been taken from client intake and interviews conducted by The Advocates for Human Rights between the time periods of January 2015 and June 2022. The case information, documented by asylum-seekers from Ethiopia, is anonymous and confidential. As such, some information has been removed from this submission in order to protect the identities of the individuals and their families.

⁹ Amnesty International, *Beyond Law Enforcement: Human Rights Violations by Ethiopian Security Forces in Amhara and Oromia*, AFR 25/2358/2020, 26–27, May 29, 2020.

¹⁰ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2015-2022).

¹¹ Committee against Torture, *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention*, (Jan. 20, 2011), U.N. Doc CAT/C/ETH/CO/1, ¶ 10.

¹² *Ibid.* ¶ 18.

¹³ Committee against Torture, *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention*, (Jan. 20, 2011), U.N. Doc CAT/C/ETH/CO/1, ¶ 30.

¹⁴ Committee against Torture, *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention*, (Jan. 20, 2011), U.N. Doc CAT/C/ETH/CO/1, ¶ 15.

9. Ethiopia informed the Committee about the Defense Forces Proclamation No. 1100/2019, which gives the military jurisdiction power to determine if military personnel may have committed torture.¹⁵ In Ethiopia, the military is not subject to civil jurisdiction.¹⁶ Consequently, Ethiopia's legal framework lacks guarantees of judicial remedy as the competence of military judicial organs should be limited to infractions within military environments.¹⁷
10. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) lacks the independence to investigate impartially.¹⁸ The State report does not specify any judicial investigation or sanction that has followed an EHRC investigation.¹⁹

III. The State Party fails to provide fundamental legal safeguards within its jurisdiction and its treatment of prisoners and detainees fails to meet international standards.

11. In its 2011 Concluding Observations, the Committee against Torture recommended that the State take urgent measures to improve the conditions of detention and investigate and prosecute deaths in custody and as a result of torture.²⁰ The Committee noted reports that torture is commonly used during interrogation to extract confessions when the suspect is deprived of *fundamental legal safeguards, particularly access to legal counsel*.

Monitoring and inspection of places of deprivation of liberty (para. 13) and conditions of detention (para. 26)

12. In its Second Periodic State Party Report to the Committee, Ethiopia informed that several detention centers had been closed because detainees were subjected to torture and kept in inhuman conditions. The State identified the *Ma'ekelawi* detention center and the *Jigjiga* Central Prison for this purpose.²¹ The Ethiopian State did not provide information to the Committee about further investigations to determine the individuals responsible for these human rights violations or provide remedies.²² A client informed The Advocates that people

¹⁵ Committee against Torture, *Second periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 19 of the Convention, due in 2014*, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/ETH/2, ¶¶15–16; Defense Forces Proclamation, Proclamation No.1100 §28-40 (2019), <https://chilot.me/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Proclamation-No.-1100-2019-Defense-Forces-Proclamation.pdf>

¹⁶ Interview by The Advocates 2022.

¹⁷ General Assembly, *Civil and political rights, including the questions of independence of the judiciary, administration of justice, impunity*, (Sep. 12, 2006), U.N. Doc. A/61/384 (transmission of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Leandro Despouy).

¹⁸ Human Rights Watch, “‘We are Like the Dead’: Torture and other Human Rights Abuses in Jail Ogaden, Somali Regional State, Ethiopia,” accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/07/04/we-are-dead/torture-and-other-human-rights-abuses-jail-ogaden-somali-regional>.

¹⁹ Committee against Torture, *Second periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 19 of the Convention, due in 2014*, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/ETH/2, ¶ 11, 17,18.

²⁰ Committee against Torture, *Concluding observations on the initial periodic report of Ethiopia, adopted by the Committee at its 974th and 975th Session (1-19 November 2010)*, U.N. Doc CAT/C/ETH/ ¶ 29.

²¹ Committee against Torture, *Second periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 19 of the Convention, due in 2014*, U.N. Doc. CAT/C/ETH/22, ¶ 19.

²² See Committee against Torture, *Second periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 19 of the Convention, due in 2014*, U.N. Doc. CAT/C/ETH/2, ¶¶ 17-30.

are still being subject to torture in other detention centers, and these were only close due that they were publicly known.²³

13. The State of Ethiopia also claimed that the EHRC regularly visits police detention centers and prisons. The findings are shared with the relevant authorities, measures are taken regularly to improve detention conditions with available resources; other governmental agencies also monitor the detention conditions.²⁴ The State avoids providing examples about what measures have been taken by the relevant authorities and whether further investigations about individual responsibilities -and sanctions- have been brought as a consequence of the described findings.
14. Many clients of The Advocates for Human Rights have reported that government officials took them to detention centers without grounds for arrest or trial. At the detention centers, individuals were held in dark rooms, either in solitude or overcrowded conditions, and experienced regular beatings from guards. Clients report not having adequate food, such as bread and water or rooting food, sleeping, or bathroom facilities.²⁵ Human Rights Watch has reported that “thousands of other adult and adolescent men and women remained in detention facilities, facing life-threatening torture, starvation, and denial of medical care in overcrowded sites.”²⁶

Extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances (para. 15)

15. **Human rights organizations continue to document excessive and lethal use of force by State actors.**²⁷ Various clients interviewed by The Advocates reported that people were injured and killed after security forces fired into crowds in the Oromo cultural-religious festival of Irreechaa.²⁸ Amnesty International documented at least 39 extrajudicial executions in the Oromia region in 2019 and 2020.²⁹ Ethiopian security forces have carried out arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances of Tigrayans in the last year.³⁰

²³ Interview conducted by the Advocates (2022).

²⁴ Committee against Torture, *Second periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 19 of the Convention, due in 2014*, U.N. Doc. CAT/C/ETH/2, ¶ 52.

²⁵ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2014-2018); Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Tigray conflict: Report calls for accountability for violations and abuses by all parties,” accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/2021/11/tigray-conflict-report-calls-accountability-violations-and-abuses-all-parties>.

²⁶ Human Rights Watch, “*We will Erase you from this Land Crimes against Humanity and Ethnic Cleaning in Ethiopia’s Western Tigray Zone*,” (6 Apr. 2022), accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2022/04/06/we-will-erase-you-land/crimes-against-humanity-and-ethnic-cleansing-ethiopias>.

²⁷ UK Home Office, Country Policy and Information Note Ethiopia: Oromos, the Oromo Liberation Front and the Oromo Liberation Army (March 2022): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1061342/ETH_CP_IN_Oromos_OLF_and_OLA.pdf.

²⁸ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2014-2022).

²⁹ Amnesty International, *Beyond Law Enforcement: Human Rights Violations by Ethiopian Security Forces in Amhara and Oromia*, (2020), 17, <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR2523582020ENGLISH.PDF>. p. 18,19.

³⁰ Human Rights Watch, “Ethiopia: Ethnic Tigrayans Forcibly Disappeared: Discriminatory Arrests, Detentions, Business Closures in Addis Ababa,” accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/08/18/ethiopia-ethnic-tigrayans-forcibly-disappeared>.<https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/08/18/ethiopia-ethnic-tigrayans-forcibly-disappeared>.

16. Organizations have reported the practice of using drones to perpetrate extrajudicial killings. Human Rights Watch said that “an apparent armed drone dropped three bombs on the compound in the town of Dedebit, killing at least 57 civilians and wounding more than 42 others [...]no evidence of military targets.”³¹. Amnesty International also documented that “an airstrike on the Edaga Selus village market in Tigray killed more than 50 and wounded many others among the civilian population. there was no known military target nearby.”³²
17. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) found that “Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers prohibited relatives of victims of summary execution from collecting the bodies and burying them, aggravating the severe suffering of surviving family members who had suffered the loss of their close relatives.”³³

Arbitrary arrests and detention (para. 31)

18. Multiple clients of The Advocates **have been detained for their association with a political organization, participation in a protest, or for speaking out against policy or government actions.** A client was detained after speaking out about the government’s lack of support for workers at a meeting on improving working conditions.³⁴
19. The State party fails to provide guarantees of legal representation to the detainees. The Ethiopian Constitution places the burden on the defendant to persuade the court that a miscarriage of justice will occur if a public defender is not appointed in their case³⁵. As a result, many defendants receive sentences without legal counsel.³⁶ Detainees are also imprisoned for months without formally being charged by state authorities.³⁷ Reports of arbitrary arrest and detention remain widespread, particularly arrests of journalists and those who are or are perceived to support opposition groups.³⁸
20. The Ethiopian legal framework facilitates these systemic practices of arbitrary arrest and detention. The Constitution allows the suspension of civil and political rights such as the habeas corpus under a state of emergency.³⁹ By June 2022, Ethiopia is not under a state of emergency status. However, interviewees by The Advocates have recalled that the State is

³¹ Human Rights Watch, “Ethiopia: Airstrike on Camp for Displaced Likely War Crime,” accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/03/24/ethiopia-airstrike-camp-displaced-likely-war-crime>.

³² Amnesty International, “Ethiopia 2021,” accessed June 9, 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/ethiopia/report-ethiopia>.

³³ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC)& Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report about Joint Investigation into Alleged Violations of International Human Rights, Humanitarian and Refugee Law Committed by all Parties to the Conflict in the Tigray Region, of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*. ¶134, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/OHCHR-EHRC-Tigray-Report.pdf>

³⁴ Interviewed with a human rights defender by the Advocates (2014-2022).

³⁵ 1994 CONSTITUTION [Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia] art. 20.5, <http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/et/et007en.pdf>.

³⁶ Interviewed with a human rights defender by the Advocates (2022).

³⁷ Interviewed with a human rights defender by the Advocates (2022).

³⁸ Human Rights Watch, “*World Report 2020: Ethiopia: Events of 2019*,” accessed June 9, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/ethiopia>.

³⁹ 1994 CONSTITUTION [Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia] art. 20.5, available online at <http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/et/et007en.pdf>.

currently in a *de facto state of emergency*.⁴⁰ Our informants asserted, “the reality on the field is very different, many regions are still under military control, but it has not been officially declared.”⁴¹

21. Many of The Advocates’ clients report having been detained by the Ethiopian authorities without formal charges and with little or no opportunity to contact their families. Instead of a fair trial, the individuals were detained, beaten, tortured, raped, and some were killed. Interrogations often involved an Ethiopian guard accusing the detained person of supporting an opposition party while subjecting the person to beatings or other forms of torture. As a condition of release, individuals were forced to sign confessions or agreements not to participate in certain political activities.⁴²
22. Government forces came to another client’s office, accused him of organizing a protest against the government, and arrested him. According to the client, security officers arrested Tigray employees who worked with Tigray directors.⁴³ Many detainees reportedly are held in detention without formal charge for months or years.⁴⁴

Coerced confessions (para. 31)

23. The Committee noted reports of torture is commonly used during interrogation to extract confessions when the suspect is deprived of fundamental legal safeguards, particularly access to legal counsel⁴⁵ In its 2011 Concluding Observations, the Committee was concerned about the “reports of cases of confessions obtained through torture and at the lack of information on any officials who may have been prosecuted and punished for extracting such confessions (arts. 2 and 15)”⁴⁶ The Committee noted that the existing provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code prohibit the admissibility of evidence obtained through torture.⁴⁷
24. Ethiopia reported in 2020 that the Criminal Justice Policy prohibits admission of forced confessions in a court of law, and the State released and/or dropped charges brought against thousands of prisoners and all arrested persons in 2018.⁴⁸
25. In practice, the State continues to obtain coerced confessions by torturing its detainees. A client of The Advocates was arrested after being accused of being part of the Tigray People’s Liberation. In detention, our client was tortured by hitting and constantly pouring cold water on him to cause deliberate sleep deprivation. The agents threatened him with murder or imprisoned him if he did not sign a document -allegedly with a confession-.⁴⁹

⁴⁰ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2022).

⁴¹ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2022).

⁴² Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2014-2022).

⁴³ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2015-2022)

⁴⁴ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2022).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Committee against Torture, *Concluding observations on the initial periodic report of Ethiopia, adopted by the Committee at its 974th and 975th Session (1-19 November 2010)*, U.N. Doc CAT/C/ETH/ ¶ 31.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Committee against Torture, *Second periodic report submitted by Ethiopia under article 19 of the Convention, due in 2014*, U.N. Doc. CAT/C/ETH/2, ¶ 52.

⁴⁹ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2014-2022).

26. Individuals also have been targeted for expressing their opinions about human rights abuses and other issues. One of The Advocates' clients, a doctor, was targeted after stating that prisoners required adequate care. Officers later interrogated and accused him of opposing the government. He heard that those who denied accusations were often tortured and killed, so to prevent further harm to himself, the client signed documents stating that he was involved in various opposition groups.⁵⁰

IV. The State party fails to protect women and LGBTIQ+ individuals from violence and harmful traditional practices (para. 32)

27. The Advocates has received numerous **firsthand reports of sexual and gender-based violence against women, including torture, ill-treatment, beating, and rape enacted by government security forces in places of detention.** Clients did not have access to reporting mechanisms, and abusers acted with impunity.⁵¹ Multiple clients report cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment as well as the systemic application of torture by security forces and in detention centers. Clients reported being beaten,⁵² threatened with violence by police forces,⁵³ and having their homes invaded⁵⁴ during their arrest. Multiple clients reported being tortured⁵⁵ — one of whom was beaten while pregnant.⁵⁶ Two clients reported being deprived of food and water while detained in unsanitary conditions;⁵⁷ one did not have access to a restroom.⁵⁸

28. Women are subject to different modalities of torture. One client interviewed reported that she was arbitrarily detained several times by Ethiopian Police Forces and tortured physically and physiologically while in custody, and on other occasions. She detailed being beaten until she got unconscious, and the police threatened her with killing her as the state forces did with her husband, causing not only physical but emotional distress. She was detained before the funeral of her husband and banned to attend the funeral or organizing any following memorial. The client recalled she has also harassed and surveillance in her house after her release from detention.⁵⁹

29. Multiple clients denounced that state agents -military and police-threaten women with rape as a method for silencing potential claims of torture, extrajudicial killing, and arbitrary detention from the victims or their relatives.⁶⁰ The EHRC and OHCHR also observed in their joint investigation that women are raped in detention.⁶¹

⁵⁰ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2015-2022).

⁵¹ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2017-2022).

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Interview conducted by the Advocates (2021).

⁶⁰ Interview conducted by The Advocates (2014-2022).

⁶¹ Supra. 3. ¶136.

30. There are many accounts of gender-based violence in detention, most prevalently torture and rape.⁶² Multiple clients of The Advocates reported torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishment inflicted upon themselves and their immediate families in local police stations, interrogation centers in military camps, *Maekelawi* prison, and the *Zuwai* detention center.⁶³ There are no current mechanisms to report, investigate, or prosecute the rape and torture of women in prison.⁶⁴
31. Multiple clients reported sexual abuse, rape, gang rape, and attempted rape in detention centers.⁶⁵ A client reported being forced to perform uncompensated labor in a detention center.⁶⁶ Another client reported being illegally detained and sexually abused by the Tigre Military Forces, who mocked and forcibly undressed her.⁶⁷ The stigma associated with rape and other forms of sexual abuse deter many women from reporting this abuse.
32. LGBTIQ+ individuals also experience violence and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in Ethiopia. Most LGBTIQ+ individuals do not reveal their sexual orientation or gender identity publicly due to the fear of societal stigma and physical harm.⁶⁸ Many individuals have reported that societal attitudes and discrimination have had a harmful impact on their mental health, including anxiety, depression, self-ostracism, and attempts at suicide.⁶⁹ Ethiopia does not have a law that would support the investigation or prosecution of human rights abuses against LGBTIQ+ individuals.⁷⁰ In public testimony, LGBTIQ+ defenders denounced attacks and threats, the police were constantly harassing them in their houses and their neighbors were constantly attacking them.⁷¹

V. Restrictions on NGOs working in the field of human rights and the administration of justice (para. 34)

33. Ethiopia noted the creation of the 2019 Organizations of Civil Societies Proclamation. This new legislation still gives the government the power to refuse registration to organizations and imposes the organizations' charitable committee to require the permission of the state agency to collect funds to open a bank account.⁷²

⁶² Human Rights Watch, "*We are Like the Dead*," *supra* note 18, at 37.

⁶³ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2017-2019) (on file with The Advocates for Human Rights).

⁶⁴ Human Rights Watch, "*We are Like the Dead*," *supra* note 18, at 38-39.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ BBC News, "Ethiopia religious anger over US gay tour plan," accessed June 9, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48512407>.

⁶⁹ Selamawit Tsegaye, "The Human Rights Approach to sexual minority right: the life and experience of gay, lesbian and bisexual Ethiopians living in Addis Ababa," *Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies Center for Human Rights*, Dec. 1, 2014, 58, 66); United States Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, 2019 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Ethiopia, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/ethiopia/>.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Salzburg Global Seminar, "Noel Iglessias and Negede Gezahegn on seeking asylum in Austria | Salzburg Global LGBT Forum." Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, Aug. 21, 2017. Accessed June 10, 2022.

⁷² International Center for Non-Profit Law, "*Civic Freedom Monitor Ethiopia*," (*Jan, 14, 2022*), Accessed Jun. 5 2022, <https://www.icnl.org/resources/civic-freedom-monitor/ethiopia>.

34. **In spite of some positive measures and reforms, government forces continue to arbitrarily arrest and detain journalists and other individuals who express opinions critical of the government.**⁷³ On 2019, the editor-in-chief of a television station and newspaper was arrested and charged under the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation.⁷⁴ In 2022, news reports denounced that Ethiopia holds journalists in detention centers without charge.⁷⁵
35. Interviewees with the Advocates reported that in the Tigray region, the military continues to block routes to the region for food and medicine provision by humanitarian organizations.⁷⁶

Surveillance and harassment

36. In addition, many of The Advocates' clients who were activists in Ethiopia reported that the government uses social media for surveillance and threats. The Ethiopian Government allegedly also promotes surveillance among their population, rewarding the information about political dissenters and human rights defenders.
37. Several clients interviewed have shared acts of harassment their families have endured as reprisal for our clients' opposition to the government. When authorities were unable to find one client who had fled the country, they went to his mother's shop. The officers threw his mother to the ground, beat his brother, and detained them for one to two days. During the detention, officials beat the client's brother. After the client's mother and brother were released, officers returned to the shop again, harassed and intimidated them, and informed the client's brother that he needed to tell the client to return to Ethiopia.⁷⁷
38. Another client reportedly detained and tortured shared with The Advocates that members of his family have been detained and forcibly disappeared for helping him to escape. The client's brother was also arrested and tortured by government agents after telling the agents that the client left the country.⁷⁸ Another client reported that police officers came to their parent's house, searched all the rooms, and destroyed their belongings while questioning the family about the client's whereabouts. The government police have also offered to reward people in their neighborhood for information about our client and his family.⁷⁹ Other human rights groups also have reported multiple cases of security forces arresting, detaining, and assaulting

⁷³ Freedom House, "Ethiopia: Freedom in the World 2022 Country Report," accessed June 9, 2022, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/ethiopia/freedom-world/2022>.

⁷⁴ Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: New Journalist Arrests put Press Freedom Gains at Risk," accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/07/ethiopia-new-journalist-arrests-put-press-freedom-gains-at-risk>.

⁷⁵ Halima Athumani, "Ethiopia Holding Journalists in Detention Centers Without Charge." Online video clip. *Voice of America*. Voice of America, June 07, 2022. Accessed June 10, 2022, <https://www.voanews.com/a/ethiopia-holding-journalists-in-detention-centers-without-charge/6607108.html>.

⁷⁶ Interviews conducted by the Advocates (2022), BBC News, "Ethiopia's Tigray crisis: Why it's hard getting aid into the region," accessed June 9, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/57929853>.

⁷⁷ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2015-2020).

⁷⁸ Interviews conducted by the Advocates (2009-2022).

⁷⁹ Interviews conducted by The Advocates (2022).

family members, including children, in place of the individuals they sought to arrest but could not find.⁸⁰

VI. Suggested questions for the Government of Ethiopia:

39. Relating to impunity for acts of torture and ill-treatment:

- What measures are in place to ensure that authorities comply with prohibitions against torture?
- What administrative measures has the state taken to ensure that torture claims are thoroughly investigated and sanctioned?
- What measures are in place to hold accountable perpetrators of torture?
- What policies are in place to ensure that individuals who have been subjected to torture are provided with compensation and rehabilitation services?
- Please provide information about the civil court investigations and decisions sanctioning torture and ill-treatment and rewarding compensation to the victims or their families.

40. Relating to fundamental legal safeguards within the jurisdiction and its treatment of prisoners and detainees:

- What steps is the government of Ethiopia taking to ensure thorough and impartial investigations of allegations of extrajudicial executions, and to hold perpetrators accountable?
- What measures are in place to prevent law enforcement from conducting arbitrary arrests and detention?
- What measures are in place to ensure that members of law enforcement comply with legislation regarding the rights of detained individuals?

41. Relating to violence against women, LBGTIQ+ individuals, and harmful traditional practices:

- What steps has the government of Ethiopia taken to consider crimes committed based on the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity hate crimes?
- What steps have been taken to train federal, state, and municipal law enforcement on international standards and best practices for treating LGBTI individuals and preventing violence against them?

42. Relating to restrictions on NGOs working in the field of human rights and the administration of justice

- What steps has the government of Ethiopia taken to create specific legislation ensuring freedom of association, and preventing harassment and violence against government critics and members of opposition groups?

⁸⁰ Amnesty International, *Beyond Law Enforcement: Human Rights Violations by Ethiopian Security Forces in Amhara and Oromia*, (2020), 20. <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR2523582020ENGLISH.PDF>.