



American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Healthcare

555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
202/879-4400
www.aft.org

Edward J. McElroy
PRESIDENT

Nat LaCour
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Antonia Cortese
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENTS

Shelvy Y. Abrams
Mary Bergan
Michelle Bodden
Barbara Bowen
Linda Bridges
Kenneth Brynien
Stacey Caruso-Sharpe
Kathy Chavez
Lee Cutler
Edward Doherty
Kathleen M. Donahue
James F. Dougherty
Eric Feaver
Andy Ford
Janna K. Garrison
David Gray
Judy Hale
David Hecker
Richard Iannuzzi
Sandra C. Irons
Lorretta Johnson
Ted Kirsch
Alan Lubin
Louis Malfaro
Tom Mooney
Maria Neira
Ruby Newbold
Candice Owley
Marcia B. Reback
Laura K. Rico
Pat Santeramo
Judy Schaubach
William Scheuerman
Sandra Schroeder
Marilyn Stewart
Ivan Tiger
Ann Twomey
Adam Urbanski
Randi Weingarten

January 22, 2007

His Excellency Meles Zenawi
Prime Minister
P.O. Box 1031
Addis Ababa
Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

VIA FACSIMILE: +251 11 552020

Dear Prime Minister Zenawi:

I am writing on behalf of the 1.3 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, to express our concern about the continuing intimidation, harassment and torture of leaders and members of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association (ETA) headed by Gemoraw Kassa.

Our colleagues in Education International, the global federation of democratic teacher unions, have informed us that three Ethiopian colleagues – Tilahun Ayalew, Meqcha Mengistu and Antenech Getnet – were arrested in December 2006 and detained without warrant. We have been told that both Tilahun Ayalew and Antenech Getnet have been tortured while in detention.

The arrest and torture of these teacher union representatives is a direct violation of ILO Convention 87 on the right to freedom of association, which Ethiopia has ratified.

We deplore the arrest and mistreatment of these respected teacher union leaders by the Ethiopian government, and we strongly urge you to take immediate action to secure their release from custody and the dismissal of all charges against them.

Sincerely,

Edward J. McElroy
President

EJM : dlp opeiu#2 afl-cio

cc: Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State
The Embassy of Ethiopia
Education International