

Jacqui Smith, MP  
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London SW1 4DF  
Fax: 020 8760 3132

Dear Jacqui Smith

**Re: Feleke Eshetu** from Ethiopia and a resident of Leeds, **HO Ref E1070027**. Is currently detained in **Campsfield House** IRC and due to be forcibly removed from the UK on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October on BMI flight BD 913 @ 14.30hrs from London Heathrow to Addis Ababa

I am familiar with Feleke's case.

Feleke was detained while signing at Waterside Court, Leeds on 14<sup>th</sup> October. He was told his Fresh Claim had been refused and Removal Directions had been set for **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October**. This was the first Feleke knew of the progress of his Fresh Claim. Following a terrifying 11-hour journey via Cambridge and Manchester, he finally arrived at Campsfield IRC at midnight.

Feleke arrived in the UK from Ethiopia on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006. He is a member of the Oromo Liberation Front, an opposition political party of the Oromo people who have suffered greatly under the Ethiopian government. Human Rights Watch reports that 'since the government banned the OLF...thousands of alleged OLF members or sympathizers have been arrested.' (2007)

Despite having a degree in Electrical Engineering, Feleke found it impossible to obtain work in Ethiopia due to his political affiliations. He was then arrested because of these affiliations and imprisoned. He managed to escape and flee to the UK, knowing this was his only chance of survival.

It must be remembered that politics in Ethiopia is not like in the UK. Simple membership of a party not currently in power leads to mass arrests, imprisonment, torture etc. It must also be remembered that being imprisoned in Ethiopia is not like being imprisoned here – it involves appalling conditions, complete lack of legal or other support and indefinite incarceration. This has been the fate of many OLF members.

As a known member of the OLF and an escaped prisoner Feleke believes that, if returned to Ethiopia, he would be immediately arrested and imprisoned. An academic expert on the Oromo people and the leader of the OLF in the UK, who lives in exile, has confirmed this.

His original claim for asylum was turned down in February 2007, appeals and reconsiderations in March, April and May were also turned down despite clear evidence that Feleke's life was in danger in Ethiopia.

Because of these experiences and his prolonged and difficult progress through the UK immigration system, plus being homeless for the past year, Feleke has serious health problems. He has long-term depression for which he was due to have a psychiatric assessment on October 16<sup>th</sup> but missed the appointment because he had been detained. He also suffers with nerve inflammation along the left of his body, which has caused him great trouble in his everyday life and studies. He is a very unwell man. He was told that he 'might' be able to see someone in the healthcare department at Campsfield.

Despite all his difficulties, Feleke has worked hard to make a contribution in the UK. He volunteered at The Yorkshire Sculpture Park before starting a Science Access course at Park Lane College, along with GCSE Math's and English. He was a popular, hardworking student who made many friends and excelled in his studies. He has offers of places on Electrical Engineering degrees at three UK universities. He just wants to pursue a career in his chosen area, contribute to life in the UK and live peacefully. This summer he undertook full time voluntary work at Park Lane helping with enrollments for the new academic year.

Please, cancel Feleke's removal directions, release him from detention and grant him Leave to Remain giving him the peace and freedom that you and I enjoy every day.

Yours Sincerely,

Name:

Address:

City:

Postcode:

Country:

Date:

Email:

Phone: