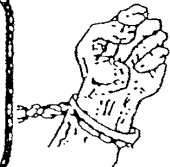




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SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE FOR ETHIOPIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS (SOCEPP)



January 26/2008

12 YEARS OLD DJIBOUTIAN REFUGEE GIRL SENT TO ADULT PRISON
OBJECT TO THE GROSS VIOLATION of the RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Hasna Mohamed Hassan was only 11 years old when the 17 years old nephew of the chief of police of Ethiopia had her kidnapped (known as "telefa"traditionally), and violated her for more than two weeks. This first happened on December 7,2007 and Hasna is now in the central prison of Addis Ababa along with adults because she denounced the rapist.The court found her guilty of 'stealing soap" and sent her to prison even though she had no legal representation and the charge was false and a cover up.

Hasna is the daughter of Djiboutian refugees though she has been schooled in Addis Abeba. Neither her parents nor a representative of the UNHCR have been allowed to see her in prison. Jailing the victim instead of the rapist is a common practice of the EPRDF controlled courts in Ethiopia, a country in which the rights of children and women are routinely violated. The regime has tried to cover up by alleging that Hasna is 16 years old though her birth certificate clearly states she was born on September 20/1995. That the rapist is also a relative of a powerful figure in the ruling EPRDF highlights the well known fact that the ruling circles are in the forefront of the violation of the rights of preteen girls and in the spread of child prostitution.

SOCEPP calls on all international human rights bodies to call for the immediate release of Hasna Mohamed Hassan and the arrest of the rapist. The regime in Ethiopia should be told in no uncertain terms to respect the rights of refugees, not to violate the rights of children and to stop jailing the victims instead of the rapists.

INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS INJUSTICE EVERYWHERE
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