



## **WE CONDEMN THE ARREST OF DR. MERERA GUDINA**

Date: December 14, 2016

We, the undersigned organizations, strongly condemn the arrest of Dr. Merera Gudina, a prominent opposition leader of the Oromo Federalist Congress and Vice Chairman of MEDREK. His arrest is the latest in a series of such detentions undertaken by the government against leaders and members of peaceful opposition organizations.

The TPLF regime's violence against opposition party members, leaders, journalists, and innocent citizens has been going on for the past 25 years and has become worse since the regime declared a state of emergency on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Dr. Merera is the leader of the above mentioned organizations that are registered in the country. He has been a champion of peaceful struggle and his outstanding leadership contributed towards building a common vision for the future of Ethiopia. He had conducted many presentations and testimonies around the world on the democratization of Ethiopia, the latest being the testimony he gave at the European Union meeting in Brussels. This meeting was organized by the European Union parliament members and Dr Merera was invited accordingly to give his testimonials about the current human rights situation in Ethiopia.

His detention has no constitutional or legal justifications. Clamping down the voices of dissent by force and arresting members of the opposition with charges like terrorism are glaring examples of behaviors of an oppressive regime.

We are also extremely concerned by the latest development regarding the whereabouts of the detained journalist Temesgen Desalegn. His family have been told that he is no more present at the center where he used to be detained, but after searching for him for the last 8 days, no official could come forward to confirm his whereabouts. This is another disturbing example of the current state of affairs in the country where the degree of accountability and the respect of the rule of law has reached its lowest level.

We therefore call on the government to release Dr. Merera Gudina and other political prisoners and lift all restrictions against the legitimate and peaceful work of all political societies in Ethiopia. We call upon all the nations that are financing this brutal regime to exert their influence and demand the immediate release of Dr. Merera.

**Ethiopian People's Congress for United Struggle (SHENGO)**

**Ethiopian National Transitional Council (ENTC)**

**Ethiopian Youth National Movement (EYNM)**