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### UNPARDONABLE PARDON—VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE

The regime of Meles Zenawi has made a mockery of justice throughout the process of what it called the Red Terror trials and it has now capped this with its arbitrary pardon of no less than 16 confirmed top criminals while it continues to hold 35,000 political prisoners in its dungeons and prison camps.

Among the released figure former prime minister Fikre Sellasie Wodgderes, the butcher sergeant legesse Asfaw, colonel Endale Tesema accused of massacring more than 1000 peasants in Bichena, Eshetu Shenkute (the man who took part in the brutal killing of 8 months pregnant Daro Ngash and is accused of murdering at least 27 other people), Gesgis Gebre Medhin, the confirmed monster of the Red Terror, etc... The regime had no legal right to bring the criminals to trial as it had itself participated in the Red Terror in Tigray, is still holding dozens of EPRP leaders and members in its secret prisons (without trial or due process) and its judiciary is not independent in any way. The process of trial and pardon is flawed through and through as it has not in any way involved the victims and their surviving kin. The religious leaders who called for the pardon for the criminals are also accomplices of the regime and have never been heard uttering a word against the gross human rights violations of the Meles regime. It is to be

remembered that previously other notorious killers like Ergete were released arbitrarily by the regime.

SOCEPP had from the outset condemned the farce of the Red Terror trials launched by a repressive regime that is itself persecuting to no end the main victim of the Red Terror, that is the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party. The people of Ethiopia are not strangers to reconciliation and forgiveness but this official pardon did not involve them and is but a political manoeuvre that has sprinkled salt on the still open wound of the Ethiopian people. The blood of more than 250,000 victims calls for justice and proper closure. The right of the people to confront the criminals and to seek justice has been denied by the Meles regime.

INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS INJUSTICE EVERYWHERE  
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