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Etiopien inför undantagstillstånd som åtgärd mot senaste tidens våldsamma protester

Etiopien har under det senaste året skakats av omfattande regeringskritiska demonstrationer, med frekventa inslag av våldsamma sammandrabbningar mellan demonstranter och regeringens säkerhetsstyrkor. Etiopiska regimens svar på protesterna har genomgående varit repressivt och kraftfullt, ibland med skarp ammunition riktat mot demonstranterna med hundratals dödsoffer som följd.

Protesterna inleddes i slutet av 2015 i Oromiaregionen och spreds därefter till Amhararegionen. Dessa regioner befolkas av Etiopiens två största folkgrupper (oromo ca 35 %; amhara ca 27 %). Befolkningen i oromo ville bland annat visa sitt missnöje mot regeringens planer att integrera geografiska områden av oromiaregionen i huvudstaden Addis Ababa. Denna integrationsplan har emellertid återtagits av regeringen, alltså fortsätter protesterna utan tecken på avmattning.

Det allvarliga läget i landet har föranlett den etiopiska regeringen att införa ett sexmånader långt undantagstillstånd, med start den 8 oktober 2016. Syftet med undantagstillståndet är att återupprätta lag och ordning, eftersom den vanliga ordningsmakten inte lyckats hantera situationen.

Den utlösande incidenten för införandet av undantagstillståndet var sammandrabbningar mellan demonstranter och polis under en religiös festival i staden Bishoftu i Oromia den 2 oktober 2016, då minst ett 50-tal personer dog.

Aktuellt undantagstillstånd medför en rad restriktiva åtgärder och olika handlingar som är förbjudna (se bilaga 1).

Vad undantagstillståndets olika komponenter kommer att få för betydelse för den fortsatta utvecklingen i Etiopien är i nuläget oklart. Dock rapporterar BBC att ca. 1500 människor har arresterats sedan införandet av undantagstillståndet¹.

Lifos avser att upprätta en lägesanalys inom kort beträffande situationen i Etiopien.

¹ BBC 20 okt 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-37716653>

Regulation for SOE proclamation implementation

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Whereas State of Emergency is declared on 8 Oct. by Council of Ministers to restore Peace and Security in the country disrupted due to recent disturbance, violence and illegal activities expressed in destructive activities;

Whereas it is necessary to give the details of the Measures taken during the SOE to ensure their implementation and respect;

Part One: Prohibited Acts

A. Prohibited Acts throughout the Country

1. Inciting disturbance and violence

- It is prohibited to publicly or secretly incite public disturbance, violence or public discomfort or suspicion in any way or by any means including through writing, publishing and distributing papers, performance, showing of signs or using any means of communication; to import or export of any kind of publication without permit
- Exchange of messages that will cause public incitement through internet, mobile, media, publication, social media and other means is barred

2. Contact with terrorist groups

It is prohibited to:

- Any kind of communication/contact with terrorist proscribed organizations and anti-peace groups
- Owning and distribution of publications, logos of terrorist proscribed organizations
- Watching and reporting terrorist proscribed organizations' media programs such as ESAT, OMN and others

3. Demonstration and public meetings

- To ensure public peace and security organizing and holding any kind of demonstration and public meeting is prohibited

4. Obligation to provide service

- Closure of shops and business centres and absence from work without proper reason, non-provision of service
- Intimidating government and private employees not to go to work or strike is prohibited

5. Strike in Educational Institutes

- It is prohibited to undertake any activity that that will hamper the teaching and learning process in any school university or other education facility. Closing and causing destruction of education facilities is prohibited

6. Strikes in sport facilities

- It is prohibited to incite or undertake any kind of disturbance, violence in sport facilities and competitions

7. Hampering transportation flow

- It is prohibited to disrupt or disturb pedestrian, vehicle or any other form of transport flow by blockade, intimidation; to increase transportation tariff or go beyond/ outside of designated area of operation

8. Destruction of infrastructure and Religious institutions

- It is prohibited to cause destruction or loot private, public or government institutions, infrastructures, dangerous installations, investment areas and religious institutions

9. Disturbing public and national holidays

- Disturbing, disrupting national and public holidays, political campaigning that have no relation with the holiday is prohibited

10. Campaigning in religious institutions and cultural and public holidays

- In Religious institutions it is prohibited to do any political campaigning and statements that will cause public disturbance suspicion or incite disturbance aside from religious teachings

11. Disrupting law enforcement officials

- Failing to abide by or hampering orders given; refusing to cooperate or to stop up on request of law enforcement officials; disregarding checkpoints and security passes are prohibited

- attempt or Attack on law enforcement officials

12. Prohibited outfits

- It is prohibited to wear, possess, pass on or sell uniforms of law enforcement officials

13. Possession of arms

- It is barred to carry any arms, blades or combustible things in market places, religious institutions, public holiday celebration places or other public gathering areas

14. Transferring arms to third party

- No law enforcement official or anyone owning legal arms can transfer, under any circumstance, arms to third party

15. Acts against tolerance and unity

- Inciting attack or attack on the basis of personality or ethnicity is prohibited

16. Acts against the sovereignty, unity and constitutional order of the country

- Any communication or consultation with foreign governments or NGOs that would affect the sovereignty, unity and constitutional order of the country is prohibited

- Political parties are prohibited to provide press statement/opinion on local or foreign media that would affect the sovereignty, unity and constitutional order of the country

17. Presence in prohibited locations

- Going outside of Refugee Camps without proper authorization or entry to the country in the absence of proper visa is prohibited

18. Diplomats movement without permission

- For their safety and security Diplomats are not allowed to go outside of 40 Kms Radius without knowledge and permission of the Command post

19. Presence in Duty Station for Law enforcement officials

- All law enforcement officials cannot take leave or resign from their post for the duration of the SOE unless there is a force majeure

20. Rendering support to public disturbance

- Aiding or Abating, giving financial support, providing shelter to anyone who contravenes SOE measures is barred

Part Two

B. Prohibited Acts in Certain Parts of the Country

Measures under this section are implementable in areas to be designated by the command post

21. Carrying Arms

- It is barred to carry any arms, blades or combustible things outside of ones compound of office

22. Attacks against Development Agencies and infrastructures

- From 6 PM – 6 AM movement in development agencies, infrastructure installations, investments, Agricultural lands, factories and other similar institutions except Authorized personnel

- Law enforcement officials can take any action on any one in these locations during such times

23. Curfew

- Everyone has a duty to abide by Curfew orders to be provided by the command post

24. Disrupting actions against disturbance and violence

- Evading orders against anyone or groups who are deemed to cause disturbance or violence or in protection of those that are risk prone is prohibited

- Disregarding road blocks or prohibitions set by the command post in consideration of safety and security is prohibited

C. Duty to inform

25. Providing information of Lessee

- All owners of houses, rooms, cars or other utilities have the duty to provide copy of their lease agreement and ID of the Lessee to the nearest police station; in case the lessee is a foreigner, his/her passport copy needs to be included

26. Duty to inform

- To ensure peace and security of the country, any institution has the obligation to disclose information when requested by law enforcement official

D. Measures on those who contravene the prohibitions

27. Authority to implement measures

- Law enforcement officials and their colleagues listed in the proclamation can take measures against those who contravene prohibitions under the above mentioned articles

28. Measures

Whoever contravenes the prohibitions under part one and two can be:

i. Arrested without warrant

ii. Detained for the duration of the SOE in a location to be decided by the Command Post

iii. Advised and reformed and released or passed to the judicial system for adjudication

iv. Law enforcement officials can undertake search of any premises and seize anything that has been or can be used for commission of illegal acts at any time of the day without court order

v. Seize or prohibit any TV, media program, image or theatre, performance or messages

vi. Returns any property looted to their owners without the need for court order

vii. Orders institutions to take legal and administrative measures against students or employees who have incited disturbance

viii. Prohibit certain persons or groups suspected of inciting violence from entering specified locations

ix. Other relevant measures can also be taken as necessary

29. Self-defence measures by law enforcement officials

- Law enforcement officials, security officers can take self-defence measures on any one who threaten their life in the course of undertaking prohibited acts

30. Entry into Education Institutes

- Law enforcement officials can enter schools, universities, other higher education institutes, private organizations to avert strikes or disturbances

Part three

31. Reformation and court adjudication

The Command Post can:

1. File a case in court against those whose case needs to be adjudicated

2. Against those who have instigated disturbance and violence in the past one year,

- Anyone who has undertaken any of the prohibited acts in the past one year who comes forward within 10 days after the announcement of this regulation, will be released after counselling and depending on the nature of the crime and his participation.