



Qafar Ummattah Party

Afar People's Party

Press release

October 18, 2016

Free Mafara Mohamed Laale!

The Afar People's Party (APP) would like to express its concern on incarceration of artist, activist and politician Mrs. Mafara Mohamed Laale on October 4, 2016. She was imprisoned during a meeting organized by the District administration of Dubtie town in attempt to mobilize the local people to demonstrate against Ethiopians protest in Oromia and Amhara Regions. Mrs. Mafara opposed this malicious act Woyane aimed at to instigate conflict between Afars and other ethnic groups in the country. She instead advocated solidarity support for those who struggle for their democratic rights in all regions of Ethiopia and walked out of the meeting in protest. Shortly after she left the meeting, she was thrown into prison implementing the newly proclaimed Emergency Law that makes her the first known victim in Afar Region.

Mrs. Mafara is a famous artist among Afars and became an icon for her freedom songs. During the civil war in the 1970 and 1980s she was a refugee in Djibouti. Since then, Mrs. Mafara has been involved in Afar struggle representing the voice of Afar women for social justice and democracy. In 1990 she joined the political struggle in Afar Region and has been the most vocal and respected mobilizer in issues related to gender equality, social justice and education for women. Subsequently, she became vice president of the Afar Liberation Front Party (ALFP) until the party has been restricted from its political activities inside the country.

Mrs. Mafara has been subjected to frequent arbitrarily imprisonments and harassments during the last two decades while opposing exclusive and marginalizing policies in afar Region. However, due to isolation of the Afar Region for media, her imprisonment and other major stories has never got due attention internationally.

Now, her commitment for justice placed her under the sever woyane surveillance and harsh treatments in prison. Therefore, APP calls for;

- An immediate release of Mrs. Mafara Mohamed Laale;
- APP calls up on the International Community, Human Rights Organizations and humanitarian organizations to investigate the situation of Mrs. Mafara.

Democracy and justice shall prevail in Ethiopia!

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