

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 52nd Legislature (2009)

3 SENATE

4 RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

By: Johnson (Constance)

5  
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 A Resolution decrying the continued imprisonment of  
8 innocent civilians by the Ethiopian government;  
9 urging the immediate release of political prisoners;  
10 and directing distribution.

11 WHEREAS, the period immediately preceding the May 2005 elections  
12 in Ethiopia was an extraordinary time in its history. For the first  
13 time, the seeds of democracy were planted throughout Ethiopia; and  
14 on May 15th, 2005, Ethiopians came out by the millions to harvest a  
15 bounty of democracy; and

16 WHEREAS, instead of democracy, 193 Ethiopian civilians were  
17 killed and many more injured by Ethiopian security forces in  
18 demonstrations following the May 2005 elections. Additionally, more  
19 than 10,000 people were detained in the aftermath of the elections.  
20 According to the Independent Commission of Inquiry, the Ethiopian  
21 government used excessive force against civilians; and

22 WHEREAS, Ms. Birtukan Mideksa, one of the most prominent  
23 political leaders and a staunch human rights advocate, has been  
24 imprisoned for the second time by the Ethiopian government. Ms.

1 Mideksa, a freedom fighter and a courageous leader, has faced untold  
2 suffering over the past several years; and

3 WHEREAS, the Ethiopian government must realize that brutality  
4 and repression will never succeed in crushing the aspirations for  
5 democracy and freedom. Either that country must embrace democracy  
6 and the rule of law or face the same fate as past failed  
7 dictatorships of this world. Ethiopia must embrace the rule of law  
8 and respect for human rights and democracy. The time is ripe for  
9 democratization in Ethiopia.

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 1ST SESSION  
11 OF THE 52ND OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

12 THAT the Oklahoma State Senate decries the continued targeting  
13 and imprisonment of innocent civilians by the Ethiopian government.

14 THAT the Oklahoma State Senate strongly urges the government of  
15 Ethiopia to immediately release Ms. Birtukan Mideksa and other  
16 political prisoners, open the political process, and respect the  
17 rule of law.

18 THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the Ethiopian  
19 Ambassador to the United States and the United States Secretary of  
20 State.

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