



January 16th, 2017

**Amhara Professionals Union's (APU) Statement on the Imprisonment of
Dr. Gashu Kindu by the Ethiopian Government**

The Amhara Professionals Union (APU) is deeply concerned by the recent imprisonment of Dr. Gashu Kindu by the Ethiopian government. Dr. Gashu Kindu is a young medical doctor who established the Amhara Physicians Association despite extreme difficulties of organizing such forms of civic associations in today's Ethiopia. At a time most Amhara medical professionals are leaving the country and the quality of health care services remain in question, such types of arrests and harassments against educated Amhara medical professionals are intolerable and must stop immediately.

Although the Ethiopian government has always silenced the voice of scholars and human rights activists regardless of ethnic origins, it is very much evident that the current regime has consistently targeted, harassed as well as imprisoned Amhara professionals since it controlled political power in 1991. From the termination of the employment of tens of tenured and mostly Amhara intellectuals in early 1990's, to the imprisonment of Mr. Eskinder Nega, a journalist and former publisher, who is considered a prominent voice for the Amhara, the government has continued its policy of indiscriminately targeting Amhara intellectuals, journalists and activists more than ever. The recent mass detention of Amharas in concentration camps is quit telling of the egregious state of affairs in today's Ethiopia. Women in the likes of Nigist Yirga who bravely stood up for their rights are suffering being held under fabricated charges. Anania Sori who spoke on state owned media about the plight of the Amhara people is languishing in prison. Likewise, the Amhara Professionals Union believes the imprisonment of Dr. Gashu is not an isolated incident but politically motivated on grounds of utilizing his constitutional rights to assembly and freedom of speech.

Based on credible evidence that the Amhara Professionals Union received from sources in Ethiopia and those who follow the situation from abroad, Dr. Gashu is not only successful in his attempts to bring Amhara medical professionals together, but he also has been a vocal activist against illegally imported drugs that are commonly used across Ethiopian hospitals and medical centers. Given Ethiopia is a country ruled by a government that does not tolerate those who speak the truth, Dr. Gashu's imprisonment is not surprising in any way. However, we at the Amhara Professionals Union are deeply concerned for his safety. We urge governments, international human rights organizations, the international media, and civic and professional organizations to demand the immediate release of Dr. Gashu Kindu without preconditions.

The Amhara professionals Union,
Washington D.C.
U.S.A