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23 January 2006

ETH100909.E

Ethiopia: The deportation of Eritreans to Eritrea by Ethiopia, including who is considered an Ethiopian (August 2004 - January 2006)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Ottawa, Canada provided the following information after consultations with the UNHCR offices in Ethiopia and Eritrea:

Deportation of Eritreans by Ethiopia to Eritrea

[D]eportations from Ethiopia of persons of Eritrean origin have not happened since June 2001. In January 2004, directives were issued by the Ethiopian immigration department to regularize the status of Eritreans remaining in Ethiopia. During 2004, Eritreans were received as asylum seekers, screened by the Ethiopian Government, and given refugee status in some cases. Those granted status were relocated to refugee camps (16 Jan. 2006)

Ethiopian Nationality

For information regarding who is considered an Ethiopian, please refer to the attached legislation on Ethiopian nationality. According to the UNHCR, this nationality legislation is currently in force in Ethiopia (16 Jan. 2006).

The UNHCR provided the following additional information regarding Ethiopian nationality:

[I]n the context of persons of Eritrean origin, those who participated in the 1993 referendum on Eritrean independence are (since 1998) no longer considered ... Ethiopian citizens. The reasoning of the Ethiopian authorities is that by registering with the Eritrean authorities (prior to independence) for participation in the referendum, such persons obtained Eritrean citizenship. When the war broke out in 1998, the Ethiopian authorities decided to apply provisions stipulating that Ethiopian citizens who obtain another citizenship will lose their Ethiopian citizenship. Conversely, this means that a person of Eritrean origin, who did not participate in the 1993 referendum, will still be considered an Ethiopian citizen (16 Jan. 2006).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Reference

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Ottawa. 16 January 2006. Correspondence from legal officer.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral Sources, including: Human Rights Watch (HRW) - Africa Division, International Crisis Group (ICG), International Organization for Migration (IOM) - Field Mission in Ethiopia, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Ethiopia did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet Sites, including: African Research Bulletin; African Studies Center - University of Pennsylvania; AllAfrica.com; Amnesty International (AI); British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC); Embassy of Ethiopia in Canada; Embassy of Ethiopia in Washington; Ethiopian News Agency (ENA); Factiva; Freedom House; Human Rights Watch (HRW); Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN); International Crisis Group (ICG); Reuters Foundation AlertNet; UK Home Office; US Department of State; U.S. Committee For Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI); United Nations- Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission; Walta Information Center.

Attachment

Ethiopia. 23 December 2003. *Proclamation No.378/2003, A Proclamation On Ethiopian Nationality*.
<<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/rsddocview.pdf?tbl=RSDLEGAL&id=409100414>> [Accessed 4 Jan. 2006]

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