

## Zone 9 bloggers must be immediately and unconditionally released

ARTICLE 19 condemns the arrest of six 'Zone 9' bloggers and three freelance journalists in Ethiopia, all of whom have been charged with working with foreign organisations that claim to be human rights activists and receiving finance to incite public violence through social media.



The journalists and activists should be immediately and unconditionally released. Furthermore, United States Secretary of State John Kerry, who will be visiting Ethiopia on 29 April 2014, has been urged to prompt the Ethiopian government to release all bloggers, activists and journalists that have been arbitrarily detained.

The arrests came two days after Zone 9 - an independent collective of bloggers who use social media to campaign against political repression - announced their return to activism. Zone 9 had temporarily suspended activities following a period of heightened surveillance and harassment, and the timings of these arrests appear to be a direct attempt to silence their legitimate work and activism.

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