

Journalist could face death penalty at Friday verdict

A verdict in the trial of Ethiopian journalist [Eskinder Nega](#) and other activists accused of inciting terrorism is expected on Friday, 11 May 2012, report PEN American Center and other IFEX members, whom Nega has worked with. If convicted, Nega could face the death penalty.



Eskinder Nega

Nega was arrested in September 2011 for an article questioning the arrests of journalists and the actor Debebe Eshetu under the country's sweeping anti-terror legislation, under which he himself is now being tried. The laws criminalise any reporting deemed to "encourage" or "provide moral support" to groups and causes which the government considers to be "terrorist".

Nega was accused of affiliation with the banned political party Ginbot 7, and of allegedly receiving weapons and explosives from Eritrea so he could carry out terrorist acts in Ethiopia.

He's among five journalists - including two Swedish reporters - jailed under the anti-terrorism laws that the Ethiopian government, concerned by the Arab Spring protests last year, has increasingly used to quash independent reporting, according to PEN American Center and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). About 150 Ethiopian journalists live in exile - more than from any other country in the world, CPJ says.

Nega and his wife Serkalim Fasil, also a journalist, have remained in the capital, Addis Ababa. In 2005, they were jailed together in Kaliti Prison for treason because of their coverage of a disputed parliamentary election. The couple's son, now 7, was born in jail.

Read the [full story](#) on www.ifex.org.