



## Ethiopian Solidarity Movement

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info@ethiosolidaritymovement.org

Phone: +1 (202) 754-5328

<https://www.ethiopiansolidaritymovement.org>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Another Tragedy in the Gulf of Aden: Ethiopian Lives Lost in the “Route of Death”**

**Ethiopian Solidarity Movement (ESM)** expresses its deepest sorrow and outrage over the tragic shipwreck off the coast of Yemen on August 3, which claimed the lives of at least 76 migrants, many of them young people from the Raya region in northern Ethiopia. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), only 32 survived out of 157 passengers on board, with dozens still missing. However, latest reports indicate the death toll has risen to over 140.

This heartbreaking event is part of a larger, horrific pattern. The Gulf of Aden, dubbed the “Route of Death,” is now considered one of the most dangerous migration corridors in the world. Last year alone, over 558 lives were lost on this route, according to IOM data. The victims, driven by desperation, were attempting to reach Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations, where foreign labor is in demand—but at unimaginable human cost.

These young Ethiopians were not just seeking jobs—they were fleeing systemic poverty, political repression, state-sponsored ethnic conflict, and the absence of viable opportunities. The Ethiopian government, rather than addressing the root causes of mass migration, continues to escalate internal conflict, particularly in the northern regions. Its response to such tragedies has been negligent at best and complicit at worst—limited to face-saving gestures without substantive action against traffickers or the drivers of exodus.

The ESM urgently calls for:

- An immediate end to war and repression in Ethiopia’s north.
- A comprehensive and inclusive political settlement to restore peace, dignity, and hope to the Ethiopian people.
- Real accountability for traffickers and corrupt officials facilitating illegal migration.
- An active, not symbolic, role from the international community, including pressure on the Abiy government to end the policies fueling displacement and despair.

We commend the continued humanitarian efforts of IOM, which has supported countless migrants along the Yemen and Libya routes. However, humanitarian aid must be matched by diplomatic courage. The world can no longer remain silent in the face of a regime whose policies are driving its youth to risk death at sea.

Enough is enough. Ethiopia’s youth deserve life, dignity, and a future—not a watery grave.

Media Contact:

Ethiopian Solidarity Movement (ESM)

Email: [contact@ethiopiansolidarity.org](mailto:contact@ethiopiansolidarity.org)

Website: [www.ethiopiansolidarity.org](http://www.ethiopiansolidarity.org)