

Decision made on 23 April 1992

Finland

Asylum Appeals Board

The Ministry of the Interior delivered a negative decision on the application for asylum and residence permit October 25, 1991.

The appellant was a member of the Amhara tribe. He had been arrested in 1978 because of his brother's EPRP membership. In 1984 he had left for the USSR, to study, and came to Finland to apply for asylum and residence permit in 1990.

In Finland he had joined the COEDF organization and participated in an anti-EPRDF demonstration in Helsinki in June 1991. In Finland he learned that he EPRDF's soldiers had arrested his father in January/February of 1991.

The general situation in Ethiopia had changed after the overthrow of President Mengistu Haile Mariam in June of 1991. Eritrea had separated from Ethiopia and had an interim government led by the EPLF.

The situation in Ethiopia remained unstable with inter-tribe fighting and violence in the country-side. The relations between the EPRDF and the OLF representing Oromos had become increasingly tense and armed conflicts had occurred. There had also been armed conflicts between the government and the EPRP guerillas.

The new government had not undertaken arbitrary vengeance against Amharas. Thousands of members of the Mengistu Worker's Party and former regime employees had been arrested for the oncoming trials.

Legal Ruling:

Legal Reasoning:

The Asylum Appeals Board found that the political activity of the appellant was of minor importance. The political activity in the COEDF did not constitute a probable risk for persecution although preconditions for free activities of the COEDF might not exist in areas governed by the interim government.

Although the Ethiopian situation was still somewhat unstable, the appellant could not be considered to be in need of protection against persecution based on the facts which he had presented to the Board and the information available on the situation in Ethiopia. Thus the applicant's fear of persecution on grounds of political opinion or ethnic background could not be considered well-founded, and he could not be granted asylum.

Disposition:

The Asylum Appeals Board held the Ministry of the Interior's decision legal and rejected the appeal.