

KEITH TAYLOR
Green Party
for the South East of England

Commissioner Andris Pielbalgs,
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049, Brussels, Belgium

8th November 2010

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to voice my deep concern for Birtukan Mideksa, an opposition party leader serving a life sentence in Kaliti Prison in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Birtukan Mideksa was initially arrested in November 2005 when the Coalition for Unity and Democracy, of which she was a leader, disputed the election results. She was released in June 2007 but her pardon was revoked and she was re-arrested and imprisoned for life in December 2008, after she spoke at a public meeting in Sweden about her pardon and the process that led to her release. She has reportedly only received intermittent access to legal representation and Amnesty International considers her a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression and association.

As you know Birtukan Mideksa was one of the three finalists for the European Parliament's Sakharov prize this year, demonstrating how urgent MEPs feel her case to be. I urge you to use all diplomatic means possible to strongly encourage the government of Ethiopia to immediately and unconditionally release Birtukan Mideksa.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this highly important matter. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Keith Taylor, Green MEP, South East England.