

Home / News and Events / African Development Bank Group's international staff to leave Ethiopia over serious diplomatic incident

## African Development Bank Group's international staff to leave Ethiopia over serious diplomatic incident

2.6k Shares | 118 | 2.1k | 277 | 80 | 16

20-Dec-2023



The African Development Bank has decided to withdraw all its international staff from Ethiopia immediately. The office will remain open under an Officer-in-Charge.

These measures will not affect nationally recruited staff from Ethiopia who will continue their work and remain in the full employment of the Bank. The Bank will assure them and their families of its duty of care.

These decisions follow the recent breach of diplomatic protocol and assault by Ethiopian security forces on two of the African Development Bank's international members of staff.

Specifically, on the 31st of October 2023, two Addis Ababa based staff were unlawfully arrested, physically assaulted, and detained for hours without charge or any official explanation.

This was a gross violation of their personal diplomatic immunities, rights, and privileges under the African Development Bank Group's Host Country Agreement with the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

On learning of the incident, the African Development Bank President Dr Akinwumi Adesina immediately contacted the highest levels of authority in the Ethiopian government, following which the Bank's two staff members were released.

The African Development Bank formally communicated with the government of Ethiopia through an official note verbale on 6 November requesting a full and transparent investigation into the incident.

Dr Adesina also sent a high-level delegation of Bank officials led by its Senior Vice President to Addis Ababa on 22 November to engage with senior Ethiopian authorities on the matter and to meet with Bank staff in the Ethiopia Office in Addis Ababa.

The Bank President said, "the assessment from the Bank's delegation indicates that the situation is still not yet resolved in a satisfactory manner. It also does not provide full confidence that all the African Development Bank's employees feel safe and secure to carry out their duties and move around the country without fear of harassment."

"The African Development Bank remains particularly concerned that the Ethiopian government has, to date, not shared with the Bank any report, or details of investigations into the incident," Adesina added.

The Bank President said, "the October incident continues to cause much anxiety across the African Development Bank Group and especially among staff at the Ethiopia country office. The incident has also raised concerns among the Bank's shareholders, other multilateral development banks, international financial institutions, the broader diplomatic community, and other stakeholders."

Adesina emphasized the African Development Bank will do everything possible to ensure the safety and security of its personnel, and the protection of their rights and privileges in the conduct of their work.

In this regard as precautionary measure, he said, the Bank's international staff in Ethiopia will work remotely outside the country until the findings of the government investigations into the grave incident are transparently shared with the Bank, and full details of the measures taken to bring the guilty parties to book are made public.

He said that the African Development Bank remains committed to supporting the country's socioeconomic development. As of 30th September 2023, the Bank's ongoing portfolio in Ethiopia comprising 22 projects, totalled \$1.24 billion.

Adesina, however noted, "while the Bank appreciates the excellent relations it has with Ethiopia until this egregious incident, its continued operations and future presence in the country could be negatively affected if the incident is not fully resolved."

Contact: Communication and External Relations | [media@afdb.org](mailto:media@afdb.org)

### Related Sections

[Ethiopia](#) [The President](#)



02-Dec-2023  
Multinational: African Development Bank, partners launch \$3.9 million project to help catalyse diaspora investment in eight African countries.



17-Nov-2023  
Public-private partnerships needed to bridge Africa's infrastructure development gap



16-Nov-2023  
African Economic Conference calls for stronger political will to spur Africa's industrialisation



16-Nov-2023  
Statement by the African Development Bank Group following the illegal arrest of its staff in Ethiopia



30-Oct-2023  
Ethiopia set to host the 2023 African Economic Conference



13-Sep-2023  
Ethiopia: African Development Bank Approves \$ 104 million in funding to improve power supply in eastern Ethiopia

### Sectors

- Agriculture & Agro-industries
- Climate Change
- Economic & Financial Governance
- Education
- Energy

### Topics

- Civil Society
- Employment
- Fragility & Resilience
- Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)
- Independent Review Mechanism (IRM)

### Our microsites

- Annual Meetings
- African Economic Conference
- COP
- Africa Investment Forum
- AfDB Group: The first 50 years

### Connect with us



### Resources for

- Investors
- Academia
- Opportunities
- Newsletter