



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Briefing

Briefing Series on the Shrinking Space for Civil Society

Human Rights in Ethiopia- An Update

Tuesday, April 19th, 2016

11:00 a.m.– 12:00 PM

2255 Rayburn House Office Building

Panelists



Anuradha Mittal:

Anuradha Mittal, founder and executive director of the Oakland Institute, is an internationally renowned expert on trade, development, human rights and agriculture issues. Recipient of several awards, Anuradha Mittal was named as the Most Valuable Thinker in 2008 by the *Nation* magazine.

Mittal has authored and edited numerous books and reports including *(Mis)Investment in Agriculture: The Role of the International Finance Corporation in the Global Land Grab*; *The Great Land Grab: Rush for World's Farmland Threatens Food Security for the Poor*; *Voices from Africa: African Farmers and Environmentalists Speak out Against a New Green Revolution*; *2008 Food Price Crisis: Rethinking Food Security Policies*; *Going Gray in the Golden State: The Reality of Poverty Among Seniors in Oakland, California*; *Turning the Tide: Challenging the Right on Campus*; *Sahel: A Prisoner of Starvation*; *America Needs Human Rights*; and *The Future in the Balance: Essays on Globalization and Resistance*. Her articles and opinion pieces have been published in widely circulated newspapers including the *Los Angeles Times*, *the New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Bangkok Post*, *Houston Chronicle*, and *the Nation*. Anuradha has addressed the Congress, the United Nations, given several hundred keynote addresses including invitational events from governments and universities, and has been interviewed on CNN, BBC World, CBC, ABC, Al-Jazeera, National Public Radio and Voice of America.

Anuradha is on the board and advisory committees of several non profit organizations including the Right Livelihood Award (also known as the Alternative Nobel Prize), International Forum on Globalization, and is a member of the independent board of Ben & Jerry's which focuses on providing leadership for Ben & Jerry's social mission and brand integrity.



Mohammed Ademno is a New York-based multimedia journalist, Columbia Journalism School alumnus and 2013 graduate of Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. Prior to Columbia, I studied at the University of Minnesota Duluth where I received a dual degree in International Studies and Political Science, cum laude, in 2008.

Born and raised in Ethiopia's Oromia region, I'm also the co-founder and Editor-In-Chief of OPride.com, a multimedia website that aggregates Oromo, Ethiopian and Horn of African news. I write regular news commentaries and Op-Eds on current issues that affect the Oromo people in Ethiopia. My articles have appeared in Foreign Policy, Al Jazeera English, Al Jazeera America, Africa Is A Country, Columbia Journalism Review, the New York Daily News, and various Ethiopian websites.

I also have experience working in a non-profit environment and most recently as an Upward Bound Academic Advisor at Minneapolis Public Schools. Specialties: Africa, Ethiopia, U.S. foreign policy, youth organizing, College Advising, Citizen Journalism, Human Rights Advocacy and Ethiopian Politics.



Adotei Akwei is Managing Director for Government Relations for Amnesty International USA. Before rejoining AIUSA, Adotei was the Deputy Director for Government Relations, for CARE USA. As Deputy he worked on Climate Change, Emergencies, Countries in Conflict and Micro-finance in sub-Saharan Africa. Prior to taking this position he served as Regional Advocacy Advisor for CARE's Asia Regional Management Unit, where he supported CARE country offices in the development and implementation of national level advocacy strategies, as well as helping develop and implement regional advocacy priorities. Before joining CARE, Mr. Akwei worked with Amnesty International USA for 11 years, first as the senior Advocacy Director for Africa and then later as Director of Campaigns. Mr. Akwei also served as the Africa Director for the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, now Human Rights First, and as the Research and Human Rights Director for the American Committee on Africa and the Africa Fund. Mr. Akwei received his Masters in International Relations from the College of William and Mary and his Bachelors from the State University of New York College at Purchase. He is originally from Ghana.

Moderator



Lauren Ploch Blanchard is a Specialist in African Affairs with the Congressional Research Service, where she provides nonpartisan analysis on African political, military and diplomatic affairs, and on U.S. policy toward the region, to Members of Congress and their staff. Ms. Blanchard's portfolio focuses on East Africa and Nigeria, and on security issues and U.S. military engagement on the continent. She has written extensively on these topics and has testified before Congress on terrorist threats in the region, U.S. security

assistance, and on the U.S. military's Africa Command. She also speaks regularly at academic institutions and international policy fora in the United States and abroad. Prior to joining CRS, Ms. Blanchard managed governance programs in East and Southern Africa. Previously, Ms. Blanchard served as Legislative Assistant in the United States Senate. She holds a master's degree in National Security Studies from Georgetown University and a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Classical Studies, with a minor in African Studies, from the University of Florida.