



Press Release About the Killings in Guliso District of Western Oromia

The Oromo Human Rights and Relief Organization in the German language known as (Oromo Menschenrechts und Hilfs Organisation OMRHO e.V.) heard with a great shock about the killings of civilians who are said to be ethnic Amhara who settled in West Oromia Guliso district on the 1st of November 2020. The government of Ethiopia is accusing the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) and Tigray Liberation Front (TPLF) for the killings in Guliso District. Such allegation before making investigation does not surprise our organization because the Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the former name the current Ethiopian regime led by Dr. Abiy Ahmed was doing this since it came to power in 1991. To mention some examples, in 1992 a group of ethnic Amhara who were living in Eastern Oromia Bedennoo were killed and Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) was blamed for the killings. At that time OLF was in the transitional government and repeatedly demanded the independent investigation. However, the EPRDF led government of Ethiopian failed to conduct the investigation. After many years, the relatives of the victims appeared on TV and accused the security forces led by late Prime minister Meles Zenawi for killing their relatives.

In 2000 government soldiers massacred about 200 civilians of ethnic group Sidama in Awaassa. In 2003 about 424 civilians of ethnic group Anyua in Gambella region, including the Pastor of Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Pastor Okuwer Olleto were killed. In 2007 about 20 civilians of ethnic group Oromo including Ayisha Ali were massacred by EPRDF at Gaara Sufi near Meoso town of Eastern Hararge. In 2012 many Oromo civilians were massacred and about 12000 were evicted from Benishangul Gumuz zone. All these terror acts against civilians were not investigated. In 2018 when he became the prime Minister of Ethiopia, at his speech in Minneapolis Minnesota, Dr. Abiy admitted that the government he served for committed terrorism and promised

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to end such kind of crime against humanity. However, under his leadership many civilian Oromos were killed and about 1.5 Million were evicted from Somali regional state. In 2019 illegally he assigned the killing squad so called “command post” in Wollaga and Guji Zones of Oromia. In 2019 in Benishangul Gumuz zone hundreds Oromos were massacred. In the same year armed groups massacred about 250 ethnic group Gumuz who were worshipping in the church. The killings of civilians, burning houses with human beings, animals, and grains which targeted ethnic Oromos, Gumuz, Agaw, Qimant, Kaficho, and others were not investigated by independent experts. Many human rights organizations including Amnesty, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights League Horn of Africa; Oromia Support Group and our organization OMRHO e.V, have demanded the Ethiopian government to allow the independent international organizations to make fair investigations of the killings of civilians in Ethiopia.

However, the government did not pay attention to the human rights groups’ reports but the killings, and disappearances of civilians continued. Whenever killings occur, the government of Dr. Abiy always blames Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) whom they call “ABO Shane” and the Tigray Liberation Front (TPLF), that rules Tigray region of his government. When the popular Oromo singer Hacaaluu was assassinated in June 2020 the government claimed OLA & TPLF. The government also blamed OLA and TPLF for kidnapping ethnic Amhara students from Dembi Dollo University and the EAST media broadcasted baseless propaganda without having tangible evidence. Later the families of the students said that some of the students were found in Bahirdar Airport and flew to Addis Ababa. Until today the government failed to make investigations and inform the public.

Our organization OMRHO e.V. is very much concerned for the lives of civilians in Ethiopia. Every day many Oromo civilians are killed either by the hands of soldiers of the command posts or unknown individuals. The killings in Oromia includes all age groups, genders, and all religious groups. We are also very much worried by the statement of Deputy Prime minister of Ethiopia

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Demeke Mekonnen who belongs to ethnic Amhara saying, “The Amhara people should be armed and protect themselves”. Similarly, the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church also said that Christians should be armed and protect themselves. Neither the deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia nor the Patriarch spoke about the genocide conducted in Oromia and other regions of Ethiopia. For instance, when Rev. Itefa Tekatu Rebu of the Mekane Yesus church was taken from his home by soldiers and killed, there was no investigation let alone reporting. The recent killings of Imams in Shashamanne and the Killing of Priest Petros Tesfaye Aga (Oromo Priest of the Ethiopian Orthodox) Church on 24. October in Sabata town were ignored by officials. According to Voice of America Radio Afaan Oromo interview with the relatives of the victims in Guliso district, the killing of civilians was conducted an hour after the government soldiers were ordered to leave the area. This raises a valid question why the government removed the soldiers who were supposed to keep peace there? This and other similar questions must be investigated.

In addition to the above-mentioned human rights violations, term of the government of Dr. Abiy ended on the 5th of October 2020. However, Dr. Abiy and his group violated the rule of the country and continued to rule the country by force. Like his predecessors Dr. Abiy is becoming a dictator, refusing political dialogue, and declaring wars on peoples who refuse to accept his own new formed Prosperity Party. Thus, one cannot expect from such government to make fair investigation. Therefore OMRHO e.V. calls up on the international governmental and non-governmental organizations who are responsible for peace, stability and justice make independent investigations of all crimes against humanity conducted in the last two years that includes all Oromia regions including hat of Guliso District and in other regional states of Ethiopia.

Board of Oromo Human Rights and Relief Organization

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Germany

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