



Oromia Global Forum

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His Royal Highness King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud

His Highness king Salman of Saud Arabia,

We, members of Oromia Global Forum (OGF), a global alliance of Oromo Civic, Professional, and Faith-Based Organizations and individual Human Rights defenders and activists, residing in North America, Europe, Australia, Asia, and Africa are writing to your highness about the appalling conditions Oromo refugees find themselves in Saudi Arabia.

We would also like to thank your kingdom for the good hospitality and opportunity that was offered to Oromo refugees and immigrants until the recent crackdown.

Oromo immigrants and refugees are currently being rounded up and thrown to jails and subjected to suffering and hardship in various prisons of your kingdom. Their treatment has been inhumane and unimaginable by the standards of a civilized society in the 21st century. We see hundreds of immigrants sleeping on top of each other with no space to turn over. These refugees are jammed in prisons with no adequate sanitary facilities subjected to various kinds of communicable diseases. Many have died of diseases and by suicide because of the dire situation they find themselves in.

The indiscriminate treatment of women as well as children has made what we see extremely saddening and inhumane. We have seen women suffering and bleeding on the floors of the jammed prisons and some of them dying right on the spot. What we have seen during the last year and half is not what we expected to see happening in a country where righteousness is expected to glow like sunshine. Things are now even getting worse these days when remaining refugees and immigrants are hunted down by the kingdom's police not like humans but like wild animals. We have not been able to comprehend where such kind of animosity arises from. We currently see so many of our brothers and sisters suffering in the desert running away from the police to save their lives.

Your highness,

It must be known that these Oromo refugees were contributing to the economic development of the Saudi society by working hard in the countryside and in urban areas. They earned their living with their sweat and blood helping Saudi citizens.

It must also be known that they were forced to leave their naturally rich and green state of Oromia because of the abhorrent political situation and repression they were subjected to in Ethiopia. Many of them did not have the opportunity to live in peace to support themselves and their families. They believed that your kingdom would offer that opportunity. They arrived in Saudi Arabia after trekking thousands of kilometers in the deserts, in many cases, leaving some of their brothers and sisters dead on those treacherous tracks.

We, members of the OGF appeal to your highness with the following polite requests:

1. Stop the inhumane treatment of the Oromo refugees and immigrants in prison cells.
2. Provide them with adequate space and sanitary conditions.
3. Allow them to be legally documented and serve your society if possible.
4. If you decide not to allow them to stay in Saudi Arabia, facilitate their safe transfer to a third country of their choice working with the UNHCR.

5. Allow a safe return of those willing to return to Oromia.
6. Stop the current harsh crackdown of Oromo refugees using beatings, torture, and gun violence.
7. Establish a UN refugee camp to place Oromo refugees so that they can get life-saving aid from the international community or UNHCR and get resettled to a third country of their choice.

We at OGF hope that you would consider our appeal and resolve this humanitarian crisis and help Oromo refugees and immigrants to breathe a sigh of relief and bring back hope to their lives.

Respectfully and sincerely,

CC:

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud

Her Royal Highness Princess Reema bint Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Saudi Ambassador to

USUN Secretary General

UNHCR

US State Department

EU