



Oromia Global Forum

6909 Laurel Ave, Suite 5219

Tacoma Park, MD 20913

Email: oromiaglobalforum@gmail.com

Web Site: <https://ogfonline.org/>

Phone: 612-483-0161

For Immediate Release

Subject: OGF strongly condemns the Ethiopian Government's continued genocidal war against the Oromo people and others

Date: June 24, 2022

We, members of the Oromia Global Forum ([OGF](#)) - a global alliance of Oromo civic, professional, faith-based organizations, and scholars – would like to bring to your attention and the world community the continued genocidal war and atrocities committed by the Ethiopian government against the Oromo people and others.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, soon after he came to power in 2018, declared martial law in Oromia Regional State giving unrestricted authority to security forces to kill and terrorize the Oromo people. Since the establishment of the military rule, the Oromo people have been terrorized and traumatized. Fathers have been shot dead in front of their families, mothers are gang raped in front of their children, ordinary citizens kidnaped and tortured, grains intentionally set ablaze in the fields to starve the farming communities. Moreover, deliberate burning of peasant houses, daylight public executions and burning alive innocent citizens the security forces suspect as supporters of opposition parties have become the norm in Oromia Regional State. Peoples' rights to life, property, and other opportunities have been abolished. Tens of thousands of young men and women have been locked up in concentration camps and prisons, with little or no access to food and medical care. Having lost hope for life and opportunities the Oromo youth raised arms against the Prime minister Abiy's regime.

The regime has been perpetrating similar atrocities in the Tigray, Benishangul-Gumuz, and Gambella Regional States. The youth of these regions have been fighting for their rights. The entire Oromia, Tigray, Benishangul Gumuz, and the Gambella Regional States are now open battlegrounds between the government and freedom fighters. When the government army is overpowered and retreats shamefully, they retaliate against the entire village in the vicinity and then make the Oromo Liberation Army the scapegoat for their crimes. We believe the Prime Minister is fully aware or even orders such atrocities to be committed. The pattern has continued with the knowledge of the higher authorities in general. After each crime event concerned hierarchies shun the media. In addition, the authorities pit one ethnic group against the other and then side with the ethnic group they think would support them to stay in power. The government is committing war crimes against unarmed civilians. Multiple media organs have reported instances of flagrant government perpetrated horrific war crimes.

The Guliso Massacre: November 3/2020 BBC broadcasted that attest gunman killed at least 32 people and set fire to homes in a horrendous attack in western Oromia. The crime has never been investigated to bring the culprits to justice

Assassination of Haacaaluu Hundeessaa: June 29,2020, Addis Standard reported popular Oromo Artist Haacaaluu Hundeessaa was assassinated in the capital Addis Ababa. Following his assassination violence erupted and at least 176 people were killed, more than 900 detained including prominent opposition politicians, academicians, journalists, and several critiques of the government. Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights offered to support a thorough investigation into the assassination of the prominent Oromo artist Haacaaluu Hundeessaa. The government refused an independent investigation as usual.

Oromo Massacre in Oromia Special Zone in Amhara Region: In December 2021, Ethiopian Human Rights Commission reported about 30 Oromo prisoners were forced off two tracks and summarily executed by a group of armed

men in uniform with “Zamacha Menelik” (meaning “Menelik Campaign”) arm-banner. The killers alleged, without a shred of evidence, the victims were members of OLA. The crime has never been investigated. The Ethiopian government, the Amhara Regional State and Amhara activist media have been mute until now. But on June 19, 2022, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission confirmed that the victims were killed by government forces.

Generally, the government, its media, its supporters, and activists don’t speak out when Oromos are massacred, villages burned, but become extra vocal when Amhara is affected. They blame dead Oromo as a terrorist and mourn the death of Amhara as innocent victim.

The Karrayyu Abba Gada Massacre: December 3/2021 Addis Standard and various media sources reported the killings of 14 Karrayyu Oromo Abba Gada members or community leaders by government forces. Several other leaders were also arrested and tortured by security forces. While Addis Standard received reports of the killings and abduction of Oromo Community leaders by government forces, the Oromia Regional Government blamed the attacks on the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) at the same time. But, Mr. Angassa Ibrahim, member of Federal Parliament publicly condemned the killing and said Oromia Regional Security forces committed it. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission also confirmed the crime was committed by government security forces. But the massacre has never been investigated independently and no justice has ever been served. The culprits remain free - protected by the government.

Extrajudicial Killings in Gambella Regional State: June 19,2022 Reuters reported government security forces shot and killed at least 30 Oromo civilians alleging that they were members of the OLA. The massacre occurred following a clash between government security forces and the joint Gambella Liberation Front and the OLA. The video widely circulated showed a group of government forces wearing army combat fatigues forcing victims off trucks parked on a rural roadside and shooting them on the spot as they jumped of the vehicle. Such heinous crimes have continued with impunity

Killings in West Wallega; June20, 2022, different media sources reported violent killings providing varying deaths in Tole village in West Wallega. Addis Standard and other media outlets reported more than 200 civilians were killed in the violence. As usual the Ethiopian government accused the OLA of the crime as it has been the pattern since 2018. OLA denied the allegation and called for an independent investigation. Similarly, UN High Commissioner urged for an independent investigation. But the government has not responded to these calls.

While the government’s denials of its criminal acts and attempts to deflect and blame armed combatants challenging the regime are well known, lack of independent investigation into the violent crimes allowed the Abiy regime to escape any accountability and justice to victims and their families. The lack of accountability is also contributing to all kinds of unfounded, false accusations of groups and individuals who have not committed the crimes. The government terrorizes innocent citizens by killing some and blaming other citizens for its own crimes. On the other hand, the atrocious tactics of the government are inflaming suspicion and interethnic conflicts. Besides the government, extremist Amhara media and activists are exploiting the situation to blame the Oromo leaders and utilize the tragedies for fundraising purposes.

The OGF, condemns all extrajudicial killings of civilians and calls for an independent investigation by a third party of all massacres and holds the culprits accountable. We also call on the international media to first conduct investigative journalism to filter facts from fiction before heading to the press armed only with biased and politically motivated government issued press releases that may deepen the raging conflicts. We believe it is worthwhile to note that the Ethiopian government and its allies such as FANO, Amhara Regional State government, extremist Amhara elites, activists and media frequently use old, fake images and audios as evidence to disseminate fake news to advance their cause. Their cause is to revive the past suppressive Ethiopian regime under Amhara domination. But this illusory cause is dead and remains nostalgic for the reactionaries.

Sincerely,

Oromia Global Forum