

Press release, issued by the Oromo Scholars and Professionals group

April 30, 2024

Subject: Oromo Scholars and Professionals Strongly Condemn the Brutal Political Assassination of Mr. Battee Urgeessaa and Firmly Stand with his Family.

Oromo Scholars and Professionals (OSP) are shocked by the brutal killing of Mr. Battee Urgeessaa, a highly courageous person committed to the defense of human and political rights of all people. Over the last years, Battee had committed his life to supporting the Oromo national struggle for self-determination and served as the spokesperson of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF). Although the OLF is a legally registered political organization in Ethiopia since 2019, many of its high-ranking officers and supporters have been detained and illegally kept in prison over the last five years despite court rulings for their immediate release. Battee himself was detained and kept in jail without any charge, where police officers mistreated him. Shortly before his assassination, he was detained again after talking to a French journalist.

Despite repeated arrests, physical mistreatment, harassment of his family and relatives, imminent danger to his life, Battee remained steadfast in his defense of justice and the rights of the Oromo people. He had not hesitated for a moment to speak out about the illegal arrests of his colleagues and members of other opposition political parties, and the killings of innocent people, including in conflict areas in Oromia, Tigray, and Amhara regions. Battee was a true voice of reason and justice who was brutally silenced at *Maqii*, his hometown, near Lake Ziway, on April 9, 2024.

Oromo Scholars and Professionals strongly condemn this senseless politically motivated assassination of Battee and stand firmly by his family. There is no doubt that the killing of Mr. Battee Urgeessaa was a calculated political assassination. He was dragged out of his hotel room in the middle of the night and shot and killed point-blank by a group of armed men. Such blatant killing could not have happened without the knowledge and approval of the federal and regional officials. For this reason, OSP holds the Ethiopian government and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed solely responsible for the assassination of an innocent person. OSP demands an immediate independent and credible investigation of the circumstances of Battee's death and bringing to justice those who are responsible for his killing.

Signatories (in alphabetical order):

1. Abdisa Koricho (PhD)
2. Abraham Mosisa (MSc)
3. Adugna Birhanu (PhD)
4. Ahmed Gelchu (PhD)
5. Alemayehu Biru (PhD)
6. Aman Kedir (MA)
7. Amanuel Gobena (PhD)
8. Asebe Regasa (PhD)
9. Asafa Jalata (PhD)
10. Asfaw Beyene (PhD)
11. Ayana Gobena (PhD)
11. Ayele Teressa (PhD)
13. Bahiru Duguma (PhD)
14. Bahiru Gametchu (PhD)
15. Baro Deressa (MD)
16. Bedassa Tadesse (PhD)
17. Begna Dugassa (PhD)
18. Beekan Erena (MEd)
19. Bekele Temesgen (PhD)
20. Benti Getahun (PhD)
21. Benti Ujulu (PhD)
22. Berhanu Kedida (MD)
23. Beletech Dheresa (PhD)
24. Bersisa Berri (PhD)
25. Beyan Asoba (PhD)
26. Bichaka Fayissa (PhD)
27. Daniel Ayana (PhD)
28. Daniel Dibaba (PhD)
29. Degefa Abdissa (MD)
30. Dessalegn Negeri (PhD)
31. Desta Yebassa (PhD)
32. Ezekiel Gebissa (PhD)
33. Galaana Balcha (MD)
34. Geremew Begna (PhD)
35. Geremew Nigatu (PhD)
36. Gizachew Tesso (PhD)
37. Gizaw Tasissa (PhD)
38. Gobena Huluka (PhD)
39. Guluma Gameda (PhD)
40. Gutu Olana (PhD)
41. Habtalem Kenea (PhD)
42. Haile Hirpa (PhD)
43. Hambisa Belina (PhD)
44. Henok Gabisa (PhD)
45. Ibrahim Elemo (PhD)
46. Iddoosaa Ejeta (PhD)
47. Imiru Itana (MSc)
48. Ismael Abdullahi (PhD)
49. Itana Habte (PhD)
50. Jamal Ebrahim (MD)
51. Jemal Hebano (PharmD)
52. Jenberu Feyisa (PhD)
53. Jirenya Gudeta (MSc)
54. Junaidi Ahmed (MD)
55. Kano Banjaw (PhD)
56. Kebene Kejela (PhD)
57. Koste Abdissa (PhD)
58. Mekbib Gebeyehu (PhD)
59. Mekuria Bulcha (PhD)
60. Mesfin Abdi (PhD)
61. Michael Oli (MSc)
62. Moa Apagodu (PhD)
63. Mohammed Hassan (PhD)
64. Mohammed Tahiro (PhD)
65. Mosisa Aga (PhD)
66. Namara Garbaba (PhD)
67. Oli Bachie (PhD)
68. Rundassa Eshete (PhD)
69. Samuel Geleta (PhD)
70. Solomon Geleta (PhD)
71. Demissie Karorsa (PhD)
72. Teferi Margo (PhD)
73. Tekleab Shibru (PhD)
74. Tesfaye Negeri (PhD)
75. Tesfaye Tesso (PhD)
76. Teshome Dime (MSc)
77. Thomas Baisa (MD)
78. Tolawak Beyene (MD)
79. Tsegaye Ararsa (PhD)
80. Workineh Torben (PhD)
81. Worku Burayu (PhD)
82. Zelealem Abera (MSc)
83. Zelalem Negassa (MS)