

ADDA BILISUMMAA OROMOO (ABO-WBO)



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Regarding Abiy Ahmed's Government's War of Aggression against the Oromo People

(OLF-OLA Press Release)

The regime of Mr. Abiy Ahmed has yet again launched another coordinated offensive against the Oromo people and the Oromo Liberation Army in the Oromia region. We have witnessed several similar time-bound “decisive,” “final” campaigns that vow to “eliminate” the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), and when that constantly failed, a clear policy direction towards wholesale genocide against the entire Oromo nation. To that end, a top Prosperity Party (PP) official is on record publicly stating: “to eliminate the fish we need to drain the sea” referring to the need to wipe out entire populations in Oromia in the pursuit of the OLA.

The OLF-OLA continues to believe that there is no military solution to the problem the country is faced with. The Ethiopian civil war, of which the current offensive in Oromia is a part, is being fought against the backdrop of a mainly ideological difference. Mr. Abiy Ahmed and his Amhara cheerleaders of the civil war are hell-bent on resuscitating a highly centralized, monochrome oppressive system. The OLF-OLA and the great majority of the people of the country have always been willing to put their lives on the line, as they have heroically and repeatedly shown, to build a decentralized democratic polity where autonomous regions self-govern while establishing a strong shared rule emanating from the will of the people of the country. In other words, the ideological differences that led to the present civil war in Ethiopia stems from the regime's desire to re-establish a fascistic central government that prioritizes the narratives of the elite from one ethnic group, a revisionist approach to Ethiopia's complex history, and genocidal rhetoric against all others. The regime aspires to turn the clock back to Imperial Ethiopia characterized by a singular language, culture, and identity. The latter is being openly claimed by the cheerleaders of the civil war on regime-controlled national media no matter how much it has all been utterly rejected by the nations and nationalities in Ethiopia as evidenced, time and again, throughout the country's history and in the current civil war that Abiy Ahmed is prosecuting throughout the country.

It bears repeating that one of the primary targets of the current offensive in Oromia are Oromo civilians. Mr. Abiy's security forces target individuals or entire regions and populations for their alleged support of the OLA. Individual civilians are made guilty by association. They are found guilty of crimes as serious as treason and executed on sight because, allegedly, one or more of their relatives or members of their family or a person they know of or are once

associated with have joined the Oromo liberation army. Entire populations are being targeted; entire villages are being razed to the ground for allegedly harboring the members of the OLA.

It is a fact for all to see that the overwhelming majority of the Oromo people support our movement and the ideals it represents. However, no regime should be allowed to kill its 'own' people for their thoughts alone. Oromo civilians shouldn't have been targets of the regime's security forces insofar as they remained civilians. They deserve far better than being killed, jailed, and harassed for thinking what is best for themselves and their children. It is thought that has become a criminal offense in Oromia today.

The other major objective of the current operation is intensifying horizontal conflicts by pitting one national group against the other. This is being put to action by inviting and/or deploying Special Forces, Police Forces, and militia from neighboring regional states into Oromia. So far, members of security forces from the Somali, Sidama, SNNRP, Amhara, and Afar regions are being deployed. OLF-OLA is actively working with political leaders, and community elders of each neighboring region to avoid heightened horizontal clashes among civilians of different national groups.

We also know that the regime is deploying additional members of Amhara Special forces and associated vigilante groups into Oromia. By doing so, it aims to create unprecedented bloodshed between the Oromo civilians and their innocent Amhara brothers and sisters who live side by side in peace. The regime is eyeing to accomplish two objectives here: (a) the people of the country, across all regions, are demanding answers from the regime regarding the unbearable cost of living, precarious peace and security, jobs, basic services, infrastructure, and related basic services that a government fulfills without being asked. By intensifying horizontal conflicts and bloodshed, the regime hopes to divert the vertical demands of the people of the country; (b) after unparalleled violence and bloodshed the regime is looking to blame the OLA and other adversaries for the carnage of its own making.

We, therefore, demand the international community put pressure on the regime to:

1. Stop killing Oromo civilians for their thoughts, for supporting the ideals that the OLA represents
2. Stop pitting one national group against the other by deploying security forces of neighboring regions into Oromia
3. Stop the war entirely. Ideological and political differences can never be resolved by a military means
4. Encamp all regime armed forces in Oromia
5. Work towards a formation of an independent platform for peace talks
6. Gain back its agency and start negotiations in good faith

OLF-OLA High Command

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