



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OLLAA Rejects Sham Ethiopian Elections and Urges the International Community to Invalidate the Results

Falls Church, Virginia – There were no free and fair elections this year in Ethiopia. Tens of thousands of Oromos and opposition party leaders remain in prison. Foreign militaries have invaded. Widespread [ethnic violence](#) has taken the lives of thousands of innocent children and mothers. Famine sweeps through the nation. Large numbers are unable to vote due to irregularities or simply will not vote because of the terror they have faced, living in fear of retaliation. The [New York Times](#) reported on June 21, there was “...no voting in 102 of Ethiopia’s 547 constituencies because of war, civil unrest and logistical failures.”

The [EU withdrawal of its Electoral Observation Mission](#) cited a “lack of agreement on key parameters” when it came to election security and stability. As the BBC cites, the Mission “accused the Ethiopian authorities of not giving assurances on the independence of the mission and refusing to let them import communication systems for their security.” In response, the Ethiopian foreign ministry said the EU’s involvement wasn’t necessary “to certify the credibility of an election.”

The Oromo Action Council, in writing for [allafrica.com](#), articulates the election illegitimacy in [writing the following on June 16](#): “The necessary conditions for free, fair, and competitive election are not in place. If the election takes place as scheduled, there will be an illegitimate government that must deal with its own illegitimacy and face the consequences of conducting a sham election, the outcome of which was known well before the election.” Leading up to the election on June 21, 2021, several prominent Oromo had their social media channels blocked, including Oromo activist [Kadiro Elemo](#), whose Facebook and [YouTube](#) accounts were blocked.

As the [BBC reported](#), there is “...the risk that prolonged chaos and conflict - in Tigray and beyond - will drive the Ethiopian state back towards greater authoritarianism. There's already evidence of this - not least the number of "political" arrests, and the chilling effect of so many reports of atrocities by government and allied forces in Tigray.”

This election is illegitimate. It is time for the United States government, and the rest of the international community, to call out the Abiy administration for what it is and not just be “[gravely concerned](#).” To get on a path towards stability and prevent further chaos, Mr. Abiy ought to take the first step by immediately releasing political prisoners.

OLLAA is an umbrella organization that represents dozens of Oromo communities around the world.