



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

06/09/2021

**OLLAA APPLAUDS MS. MARIA ARENA, CHAIR OF PARLIAMENT'S
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, CALLING FOR PEACE AND
RECONCILIATION AS ETHIOPIA HEADS FOR YET ANOTHER SHAM
ELECTIONS**

Falls Church, Virginia – the Oromo Legacy Leadership and Advocacy Association (OLLAA) applauds Ms. Maria Arena, Chair of Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, calling for peace and reconciliation as Ethiopia heads for yet another sham elections. Today, June 9, 2021, following reports of serious human rights violations across Ethiopia, she expressed her deep concerns about targeted violence and large-scale humanitarian crisis. She stated, "Ethiopians must no longer be victims of targeted violence, ill-treatments, arbitrary arrests and detentions as well as discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity or religion".

Her statement is the first announcement from European Members of Parliament to convey concerns about human rights violations beyond the Tigray region of Ethiopia. It is also significant to release such a statement less than two weeks before the planned general election where Ethiopia's ruling party is attempting to convince the internal community that the clearly sham elections could be free, fair and democratic.

OLLAA welcomes all public and clearly stated serious concerns by the European members of the Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights over the treatment of prisoners across the Oromia region. Since the murder of the iconic artist Hacaaluu Hundeessaa in June of 2020, thousands of Oromo civilians of all ages including children, party leaders, and activists are detained in subpar to horrific conditions. Unfortunately, the number of political prisoners is under-stated by the ruling party and the extent of human rights violations across Oromia against Oromos are under-reported and not getting sufficient/appropriate attention. Unless these atrocities are fully investigated and the quest for peace and reconciliation commenced, Ethiopia's further destruction is imminent, and the ramifications will go far beyond the boundaries of Ethiopia and become the tragic demise of the Horn of Africa.

"To publicly acknowledge the plight of Oromo prisoners' treatment is a great first step in the right direction. However, I am disappointed that prominent political prisoners such as Jawar Mohammed and Dawud Ibsa were not named and the violence against Oromos and other groups have not been condemned more forcefully" said Seenaa Jimjimo, Executive Director of OLLAA. OLLAA believes that the only way towards peace and reconciliation in Ethiopia is via a holistic approach to address violence in all parts of the country and by holding a national dialogue.

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