



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OLLAA CALLS FOR RELEASE OF OLF CHAIRMAN FROM HOUSE ARREST

Falls Church, Virginia (03/04/2022) – On March 4th, the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia issued a [statement](#) regarding the results of their recent inquiry into allegations that Dawud Ibsaa, the Chairman of the OLF, has been under house arrest since April 2, 2021. The Board's inquiry team [visited](#) Mr. Ibsaa's house on February 28th, and found that his house was "tightly" guarded by Ethiopian security forces, and confirmed that he had been under house arrest since April when a group of armed men, "raided his residence and prevented him from leaving the premises". The Board further found that his arrest "unacceptable" from a legal ground and called for his release. On the same day, it was [reported](#) that Bate Urgessa, the Head of OLF public relations, who is currently detained, is being denied access to medical care after he was diagnosed with Hepatitis B.

Other organizations have previously reported about the arrest and continued detention of Mr. Ibsaa, without any charges. This includes Amnesty International, who sent a [letter](#) to Ethiopia's Minister of Peace in June 2021, noting that the Federal police had placed Mr. Ibsaa under house arrest without charges, and conducted an unlawful search of his property. They noted that this "house arrest amounts to arbitrary detention, and it imposes arbitrary restrictions on his rights to freedom of movement and association."

OLLAA joins the calls from Amnesty International and the National Election Board for the release of Dawud Ibsaa. International human rights law and the Ethiopian Constitution both set out that the right to liberty protects citizens from arbitrary arrest and detentions, which are arrests and detentions that are not in accordance with the procedures established by law. The continued detention of Mr. Ibsaa by the Ethiopian government without charges clearly amounts to arbitrary detention. We therefore urge the international community to condemn the decision of the Ethiopian government to keep him under house arrest, and to call for his release.

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