



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

03/14/2022

**OLLAA CALLS FOR JUSTICE AFTER VIDEO SHOWS CITIZENS BEING BURNED
ALIVE IN BENISHANGUL-GUMUZ**

Falls Church, Virginia (03/14/2022) – On March 11, 2022, a horrific video began circulating on social media which showed at least 3 men being burned alive as a crowd gathered to watch. Although the video has now been removed from social media sites, it has been [reported](#) that the perpetrators of this heinous act can be heard stating that they were doing this to avenge the death of a security officer, and using “dehumanizing languages” towards the victims. [Reports](#) indicate that members of the Ethiopian military and regional security forces were both present at the scene. Although, at this time, OLLAA has been unable to verify the exact date this incident occurred, reporting suggests that this happened in the Guba woreda, Metekel zone, Benishangul-Gumuz.

On the day following the spread of the video on social media, Ethiopia’s Government Communication Service published a [statement](#) on Facebook, in which they called the incident, “a horrible crime,” that which “should be condemned”, and pledged that the Ethiopian government would, “take legal action on those who committed such acts”.

OLLAA condemns this heinous act of violence against civilians, which can only be described as cruel and inhuman. However, this event must not be viewed as an isolated event, but as part of a pattern of horrific extrajudicial killings committed by Ethiopian security forces against the civilian population, including in the [Wollo Oromia Special Zone](#) and in the [Oromia](#) region. In late February, similar [reports](#) emerged of Amhara militias burning families, including children, alive inside of their homes in Sibu Sire.

As the primary duty bearer under international law, the Ethiopian government has the duty to fully and impartially investigate this and other similar incidents, and to ensure that the perpetrators, including both those who committed the act and anyone who may have ordered the commission of such a crime, are held accountable. We therefore call on the Ethiopian government to fulfill its pledge to “take legal action” against the perpetrators, and to ensure that the victims and their families receive justice. Finally, we call for the international community to publicly condemn this act, and to consider launching independent investigations into this incident, as well as all other allegations of extrajudicial executions and other human rights abuses throughout Ethiopia.

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