



OROMO ADVOCACY GROUP PUBLISHES REPORT ON ABUSES COMMITTED BY OROMIA SPECIAL FORCES

Falls Church, Virginia (4/26/2022) – On April 23, 2022, the Oromia Support Group (OSG), an Oromo advocacy group based in Australia, published a [report](#) highlighting rarely documented human rights abuses perpetrated against Oromo civilians by members of the Oromia Special Forces (Neftengna Special Forces) in the West Wollega zone of Oromia. This report highlights a series of abuses, including the extrajudicial killings of 15 individuals, arbitrary arrests, attacks against civilians, and the destruction of property. The report further notes that the perpetrators of these attacks are associated with the military command posts in Western Oromia.

One of the individuals highlighted in the report is Bacha Asmera, who was arrested by the Oromia Special Forces and accused of supporting the OLA. Although he was initially jailed in Guliso, according to the report, on March 23, 2022, members of the Oromia Special Forces removed him from his cell and extrajudicially executed him. The report also details violent acts perpetrated against civilians inside West Wollega, including shootings and beating individuals with sticks and wires. They noted that, when security forces spot individuals attempting to take photographs of such injuries, they are frequently killed as well.

OLLAA applauds OSG and everyone who worked on this report for their dedicated effort to gather this information, which is often a challenge, if not impossible, inside Oromia. As noted in the report, there are few independent media sources operating inside Ethiopia, making such incidents difficult to learn about and verify. In addition, internet shutdowns throughout the West Wollega zone also make it difficult for reports of human rights abuses to reach outside sources. Finally, the OSG's report also notes the failings of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) inside Oromia, including its failure to report on human rights violations perpetrated by government agents in the region. OLLAA has previously [voiced](#) similar concerns about the EHRC's reporting inside Oromia.

OLLAA condemns the violations of Oromo civilians' rights that are detailed in the OSG's report. As the primary duty bearer under international law, the Ethiopian government has the duty to ensure that State agents, including members of the Oromia Special Forces, do not harm civilians. It also has the duty to launch independent, impartial investigations into these allegations of human rights abuses and to ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable. Given that the alleged perpetrators of these acts are State agents, we also call on the international community to consider launching independent investigations into these allegations of human rights abuses perpetrated in the West Wollega zone of the Oromia region.

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