



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

05/02/2022

## **DRONE STRIKES AND ATTACKS AGAINST CIVILIANS REPORTED THROUGHOUT OROMIA AS PART OF MILITARY OFFENSIVE, LEADING TO 278 DEATHS**

*Falls Church, Virginia (05/02/2022)* – Since the Ethiopian federal and Oromia regional government [announced](#) the launch of a new military operation inside Oromia in early April, OLLAA has received numerous reports from sources on the ground regarding violent attacks against civilians, including drone strikes in West Shewa and East Wollega zones. Over the past weekend, the OLF and the OFC both released statements further detailing the effects of the military campaign on the civilian population of Oromia.

In their [statement](#), the OLF claimed that the Ethiopian government was conducting a campaign designed to, “damage the lives and livelihoods of every individual Oromo as well as weaken Oromo institutions and destruct the nation as a whole”, including by, “intentionally making Oromia a war zone.” They noted recent attacks against civilians, both by the Ethiopian federal government, and by the Amhara regional state into the Wollo Oromia Special zone. Inside Oromia, they noted that the current regime had committed “shocking atrocities” in Central Oromia, West, Arsi, East Wollega, and Guji zones, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, the destruction of property, and enforced disappearances.

In their [statement](#), the OFC also discussed the ongoing military campaign in Oromia, which they said was led by the principle of “drying the sea to catch fish,” and was leading to the targeting of civilians throughout Oromia, particularly in the Wollega zones, West Shewa, North Shewa, East Shewa, West Arsi, East Guji, West Guji, and the Borana zones, as well as inside the Wollo Oromia Special zone in the Amhara region. They also alleged that the Ethiopian government had ordered drone and helicopter strikes within Oromia, leading to mass displacement and the death of at least 30 civilians. Overall, they calculated that at least 278 civilians had died throughout Oromia in the past two weeks due to the military offensive.

OLLAA condemns these attacks against civilians, and calls on all actors, including those inside Ethiopia and the international community, to issue strong statements condemning the decision to launch a military campaign inside Oromia and calling for the Ethiopian federal and Oromia regional government forces to immediately cease efforts to “eliminate” the OLA militarily and instead seek peaceful means to address the conflicts inside Oromia, as it is doing with TPLF in northern Ethiopia. We further call for the Ethiopian government to protect its civilian population, to launch independent investigations into all allegations of abuses committed against civilians in Oromia, and to ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice. We also call on the international community to consider launching independent investigations into these, and other, allegations of human rights abuses throughout Ethiopia.

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