



## **OLLAA IS DISAPPOINTED BY FAILURE OF STATE DEP'T REPORT TO INCLUDE KARAYU MASSACRE, OTHER VIOLATIONS**

*Falls Church, Virginia (06/07/2022)* – On June 2, 2022, the U.S. State Department published its annual report on International Religious Freedom across the globe, including its 2021 [Ethiopia](#) report. These reports are initially prepared by U.S. Embassies in the countries concerned and are then finalized by the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom. OLLAA has met with the U.S. State Department on numerous occasions in the past year, including the Office of International Religious Freedom, and is extremely disappointed to find that this year's report contained no mention of the Karayu massacre or of other violations of the rights of Oromos who practice the indigenous religion Waaqeffanna.

As previously [reported](#) by OLLAA, in early December 2021, Ethiopian security forces interrupted the political and religious Gadaa ceremony in Motomoa/Karra village, Fantaalee District, Oromia. The security forces abducted 39 Karayu Oromo and killed 14 of them that afternoon, including the Abba Gada and Abba Boku, religious leaders of the Karayu. Two abductees managed to escape, and the remaining 23 captives were detained near Moju for approximately one month, where one further abductee died. OLLAA has [condemned](#) this attack against the Karayu Oromo as a form of religious targeting, and met with the State Department Office of International Religious Freedom to raise awareness to this attack, alongside other incidents where practitioners of Waaqeffana faced religious persecution and discrimination throughout Ethiopia.

OLLAA was, therefore, deeply disappointed to see that this latest report, which covered incidents that occurred throughout 2021, largely focused on violations that occurred in northern Ethiopia during the reporting period, and contained no mention of the Karayu massacre or other similar abuses against practitioners of Waaqeffanna. We reiterate our call for the Ethiopian government and the international community, including the United States, to do more to ensure that the victims of the Karayu massacre and their families receive real justice. This means that bodies like the U.S. State Department must do more to raise awareness to this blatant act of religious targeting, and to pressure the Ethiopian government to ensure that independent, thorough, and impartial investigations are launched into the killings and detention of Karayu leaders, that the perpetrators are brought to justice, and that the victims and their families receive proper restitution. OLLAA also believes the international community should consider launching independent investigations into this attack.

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