



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## OROMIA STATE MINISTER CLAIMS GOVERNMENT FAILED TO PROTECT CIVILIANS

**Falls Church, Virginia (07/26/2022)** – On July 22, 2022, the Caffee Oromia (Oromia’s Regional Council) held their annual meeting, during which time they received a report on the impact of conflict throughout Oromia and a separate report on violence in the West Wollega zone. Following the meeting, Taye Dendea, a member of the Oromia Prosperity Party and the State Minister for the Ministry of Peace, issued a [Facebook post](#) outlining his thoughts on the meeting and the situation inside Oromia, generally.

In this post, Mr. Dendea claimed that peace and security was the most important issue facing the Caffee, but that this issue was largely ignored at the meeting, and that the report given on the subject was deficient. Most notably, he claimed that the report included no data on the number of civilians who had been killed, wounded, raped, or whose property was destroyed across Oromia in the past year. He noted that they did receive data from the West Wollega zone, where it was reported 1105 Oromo civilians had died. However, he posited that a more thorough analysis would likely show that the true figures were much higher. He also argued that the impact on civilians in Guji, the other Wollega zones, East Shewa, and West Shewa zones would likely also be quite high, given the data he had previously received from the North Shewa zone, which reported that 210 civilians had died in the past year. Finally, he stated that “We failed the people that elected us just last year. The Oromia Regional Government failed to fulfill its duty to protect the civilians. The damage upon our people is shocking.”

OLLAA appreciates Mr. Dendea’s statement regarding peace and security inside Oromia, and note that it is [important](#) for Ethiopian politicians to call out the State’s failures to protect civilians and other human rights abuses. We also note that, under international law, the Ethiopian federal government and Oromia regional government have a duty to protect its citizens’ rights, including the rights to life and property. This duty includes the duty to launch independent investigations into allegations of human rights violations, and ensure perpetrators of such attacks are held accountable. However, OLLAA is gravely concerned that the Ethiopian government and Oromia regional government have consistently failed to meet their international obligations in this regard.

*OLLAA is an umbrella organization that works in collaboration with dozens of Oromo communities around the world.*