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OLLAA CONDEMNS ETHNIC-BASED VIOLENCE BY AMHARA FANO AGAINST OROMO CIVILIANS INCLUDING THE LATEST BEHEADING OF DEREJE AMARE

Falls Church, Virginia (11/23/2024) – OLLAA is deeply concerned about the ongoing surge in ethnic-based violence against Oromo civilians by Amhara Fano militias, a group known for committing ethnic war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. The latest incident, a video published on November 18, 2024, showing the beheading of 14-year-old Dereje Amare, an Oromo youth in the Northern Shewa Zone of Oromia region, has shocked the community.

According to multiple reports, [including those from Addis Standard](#), Oromia Media Network, and sources OLLAA has spoken to, violence in Oromia's Darra district has escalated significantly following the failure of the second round of talks between the government and the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA). The latest incidents have resulted in over 43 civilian deaths in the past four months. [The Voice of America \(VOA\) Afaan Oromo](#) program reported yesterday that they first tried to speak to the family of Tadese Nuguse, who was killed by Amhara Fano after being kidnapped. Despite the family paying ransom money, Tadese was killed. In the same area, the beheading of 14-year-old Dereje Amhara took place. The father who spoke to VOA said both of his children were kidnapped and killed for speaking Afaan Oromo. The beheading of this innocent child, who was not armed nor part of any armed group, led to protests in many parts of Oromia.

[On November 21, 2024, Oromia Government Communication Bureau head Hailu Adunya stated](#) that due to a lack of respect for people and hatred for the Oromo people and other ethnic groups, Fano continues to commit unspeakable crimes against civilians. He added that in the past, this group committed crimes against Gumuz by crossing borders and committing atrocities in Metekel, claiming it as theirs. Similarly, in the Amhara region, they have committed heinous crimes against the Agaw and others whom they claim to protect, including Amhara civilians. He said these groups are driven by a mission to reclaim areas once controlled by their forefathers. They are people who want to destroy the country. What they committed in Darra is just a continuation of those acts.

[Since the video began circulating online, students from various universities have started protesting](#), demanding an end to violence against Oromos. One student from Ambo University who spoke to VOA said that at least four of his friends—one girl and three boys—were injured and are in bad condition as a result of their protests. He said the government security forces began forcibly dispersing the protests shortly after they began around 2:30 PM. OLLAA saw similar videos circulating online from different schools throughout the Oromia region.

[Since 2019, OLLAA has been reporting on Amhara Fano's killing of hundreds of Gumuz civilians](#). Amhara Fano is the group found responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity,

and ethnic cleansing against Tigrayans in 2023 [by the United States](#) government, [the UN](#), and other human rights organizations. [Over the course of six years, OLLAA has reported numerous incidents of ethnic-based violence by this group.](#) In the past, the Ethiopian government and Oromia regional government had collaborated with Amhara Fano to commit or allow ethnic-based violence against Wollo Oromo, in Wollega, against Karayu, in Arsi, and now in Shewa Oromo. Rightfully, the Oromo communities across the country and around the world are in shock and anger that while the government exists in Ethiopia, the Oromo continue to remain the number one target. Furthermore, it is shocking that nearly six years later, and despite ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, the Amhara Fano has not been labeled as a terrorist organization.

OLLAA believes the condemnation by the Oromia Communication Bureau is not sufficient. We call on the government to take immediate action by bringing the perpetrators of these acts to justice, ceasing violence against civilians in the name of support for the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), and providing necessary assistance to displaced people. This includes protection against any armed group and facilitating the return of internally displaced people in many parts of western and central Oromia. We also urge the government to label Fano as a terrorist organization. We stress the urgent need for a durable peace dialogue to end the violence engulfing many parts of the country.

OLLAA remains committed to advocating for the rights and safety of civilians and will continue to monitor the situation. We express our deepest sympathy for the latest victims, including Dereje Amare's family and others affected by these attacks. We remind the Ethiopian government of its international duty to protect the human rights of its citizens, including by launching independent, impartial investigations into allegations of human rights violations committed by all parties, and to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable. OLLAA also calls on the international community to join the Oromo communities in condemning these killings and detentions, to consider launching independent investigations into these attacks, and to take active measures to pressure the Ethiopian government to end its violence against civilians and to protect the human rights of its citizens.