



OLLAA URGES US LEADERS NOT TO MEET WITH PM ABIY, SUPPORT OROMO CIVILIANS

Falls Church, Virginia (12/12/2022) – This week, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed will be in Washington D.C. while Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde attends the U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit from December 13-15th. During this time, Prime Minister Abiy and President Zewde will undoubtedly seek opportunities to meet with various leaders of the US government, including Members of Congress, State Department officials, and senior White House staff. OLLAA and the US Oromo diaspora community urge any officials who are considering meeting with Prime Minister Abiy to instead stand with the Oromos and others who continue to pray for lasting peace and the protection of human rights in Ethiopia.

The decision to invite the Ethiopian government to participate in the US-Africa Leaders' Summit has drawn [criticism](#) from numerous parties, including OLLAA and the US Oromo diaspora community. Of particular concern is the fact that one of the major [focuses](#) of the Summit is to reinforce countries' commitment to the protection of democracy, human rights and civil society. Given the recent findings by the [UN](#) and leading [human rights organizations](#) that the Ethiopian government has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in northern Ethiopia, their inclusion in the Summit sends mixed signals about the US government's commitment to these values, particularly when countries like [Eritrea](#) were excluded. Some may point to the recent peace agreement between the TPLF and the Ethiopian government as a reason to allow the government to attend the Summit. In response, we note that: a) while the violence in northern Ethiopia may be ending, the situation in Oromia is rapidly [devolving](#), with credible reports of human rights abuses by Ethiopian security forces and drone strikes leading to the death of civilians; and b) that this sends a dangerous message to leaders across the world—that the US will forget any violations you have committed, even when there has been no justice for the victims, in the name of diplomacy.

OLLAA and the US Oromo diaspora community therefore urge any US leaders who are considering meeting with Prime Minister Abiy next week to reconsider. If US leaders stand together and refuse to meet with him, and instead demand the release of recently detained peaceful Oromo protesters, this will send a clear message to Prime Minister Abiy and the world that the US stands behind its stated values of protecting democracy and human rights, and that countries who do not respect those principles will lose US engagement and support. We are further concerned that Prime Minister Abiy will use any photos taken at such meetings as a way to prove to Ethiopian citizens that the US fully supports the atrocities committed by Ethiopian security forces throughout the country.

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