



# Australian Oromo Community Association in Victoria Inc

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## **Statement of the Australian Oromo Community Association of Victoria (AOCV) on Artist Hacaaluu Hundeessaa's Assassination and Related Developments in Ethiopia.**

July 2, 2020.

We, the Australian Oromo Community Association of Victoria (AOCV) are extremely shocked and devastated by the assassination of an Oromo icon, artist and human rights activist Hacaaluu Hundeessa and the subsequent detention of Oromo Political leaders such as Jawar Mohammed, Bekele Gerba, and numerous others.

We condemn the targeted assassination of this extraordinary Oromo musical superstar whose music has been virtually the soundtrack of the mass resistance movement of recent years, most famously of the one known as #OromoProtests. Hacaaluu was a voice of his generation of young Oromos. Hacaaluu passionately believed in a non-violent struggle and committed his entire life to promoting respect for human rights and bringing social justice for the Oromo nation through his artistic talent. AOCV believes that the environment that precipitated the assassination of Hacaaluu Hundeessa was set by the current Ethiopian regime. From day one, the administration embarked on praising and building new statues for the past emperors and dictators disregarding deep historical wounds, collective bad memories and anger of the people who suffered under those rulers. The emperors, whom Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed made his role models, are known for committing genocide against different ethnic groups of the country during their reigns. Through his reactionary and imperial ambitions, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed created a political environment that led to the assassination of the human rights icon Hacaaluu Hundeessa. We hold the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed fully responsible for the assassination of Hacaaluu Hundeessaa.

We condemn the imprisonment of Oromo leaders, Jawar Mohammed, Bekele Gerba, and the numerous others that the regime arrested. Jawar and Bekele have been champions of non-violent struggle against the tyrannical regimes of the former EPDRF and the current Prosperity Party (PP). By imprisoning these leaders of non-violent struggle, Abiy Ahmed's regime is plunging the country into chaos and making violent struggle the only option left for the oppressed people.

We also condemn the closure of Oromia Media Network (OMN) by the government of Abiy Ahmed. We would like to remind the regime that OMN has persisted in the service of the people. Let it be clear to all that the Oromo people will not allow its only voice to be silenced.

We, at the AOCV, are alarmed by the growing authoritarian tendencies and anti-constitutional practices of Abiy Ahmed's administration. Given these grave circumstances, AOCV passes the following resolutions as a matter of urgency:

1. We condemn in the strongest terms possible the political assassination of Hacaaluu Hundeessaa and demand that the culprits be identified and brought to justice through a credible and transparent investigation.
2. We urge the government to release all Oromo political leaders including Jawar Mohammed, Bekele Gerba and other prisoners of conscience.

3. We demand the reopening of OMN and urge the government to refrain from obstruction of this and other Oromo media organizations.

4. We demand the release of all OMN journalists, reporters, and other staff members and its Executive Director, Girma Gutema.

5. We urge the government to release the security personnel in charge of OMN's headquarters and Jawar Mohammed's residence.

6. We urge the government to start taking all necessary measures for the removal of all statues and other relics of imperial subjugation and domination.

7. We demand that the government withdraw the excessive military forces it dispatched across the Oromia National Regional State and stop human rights violations and intimidation of the public.

8. We demand an immediate cessation of dehumanizing slurs, misrepresentations, and other forms of discursive violence unleashed, through conventional and social media outlets, against the Oromo and the other nations and nationalities of Ethiopia.

We call upon our compatriots back in Ethiopia to continue the peaceful struggle for democratic reforms and for full respect for human rights. We ask everybody to watch for each other and our leaders for the regime's possible killings and detentions and expose such acts.

The Ethiopian regime, just like its predecessors, depends on foreign aid to finance its security forces that it has unleashed on our grieving people. We ask the international community in general, and the donors in particular, to refrain from financing a repressive military regime and make all aids to the country dependent on respect for human and peoples' rights.

Finally, we express our heartfelt condolences and solidarity with Hacaaluu's family, friends, and the Oromo Nation during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

The AOCV Executive Committee