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OLLAA EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER REPORTS OF ATTACKS IN EAST WOLLEGA AND BORENA ZONES AND CALLS FOR AN INVESTIGATION

Falls Church, Virginia (10/13/2021)— OLLAA is gravely concerned about reports of attacks in East Wollega and Borana zones of Oromia in recent weeks, and calls on the international community to pressure the Ethiopian government to fully investigate these attacks and to hold all perpetrators to account.

On September 25th 2021, it was [reported](#) that 29 civilians had been killed in a series of three attacks in the East Wollega zone, perpetrated by an unnamed armed group, and leading to the displacement of roughly 40,000 people. Mere weeks later, on October 10th, it was [reported](#) that another attack had occurred in the East Wollega Zone. A witness has claimed that at least 25 Oromo were killed in the attack. He also alleged that it was perpetrated by Amhara militias, who he claimed also encouraged further violence by, “rallying up the Amhara community in town,” and called the attacks, “premeditated and organized.” On October 12th, a [video](#) [Graphic Content Warning] circulated online showing Ethiopian security forces in Miyo district, Borana zone, publicly executing two teenagers while a young man dressed in an Amhara regional military uniform proclaimed that they would kill 100 Oromos and Benishangul for every single Amhara that was killed.

Although full details of the events that transpired in both East Wollega and Borana zones remain unclear, OLLAA expresses its profound sympathy and support for those victims who were killed or injured in the attacks, and condemns any perpetrator who would commit such needless acts of violence. We are further concerned about reports of national and regional security forces’ involvement in these attacks, and note that the Ethiopian government has a duty to fully and impartially investigate these crimes and ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable.

While OLLAA commends the actions taken by many States to highlight and address the situation in Tigray and other northern regions, far too frequently, these actions fail to take into account both the impacts of the ongoing violence in Tigray on other regions, particularly in the south, and the interrelated nature of the conflicts occurring throughout Ethiopia, leading to a rapidly deteriorating human rights and humanitarian throughout the country. Therefore, OLLAA calls on the international community to respond to these attacks by publicly condemning the ongoing atrocities perpetrated throughout Ethiopia, including the ongoing violence in East Wollega, Borana, and in other parts of the country.

The international community should also apply pressure on the Ethiopian Government, led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, to:

1. Halt hostilities in all impacted regions of Ethiopia and a call for civil discourse that prepares a path toward a negotiated agreement that includes Oromos and other parties representing all the affected areas.
2. Return foreign and regional armed forces engaged in combat to their respective bases, either regional, state, or sovereign state;

3. End the use of military command posts and martial law throughout the country, and ensure the return of military forces to barracks to allow civilian administration to be put into place;
4. Immediately cease the coerced recruitment of youth from all regional states into the armed forces of Ethiopia and to the forcible transfer of these untrained, ill-equipped combatants to the battlefield

OLLAA will continue to advocate on behalf of the human rights of all Ethiopian citizens, and to call for an inclusive dialogue that includes representatives of all the major ethnic groups in Ethiopia to address the conflict engulfing the entirety of Ethiopia, which we see as the only way to achieve lasting peace and regional stability throughout the Horn of Africa.

OLLAA is an umbrella organization that represents dozens of Oromo communities around the world