



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **OLLAA Welcomes Unrepresented Nations and People Organization Dialogue**

*Falls Church, Virginia (7/28/2021)* On July 27, the Unrepresented Nations and People Organization (UNPO) published a timely report regarding its national dialogue with the World Peace Foundation. The World Peace Foundation ran shortsighted pieces that called for a national dialogue between the federal government, the Amhara and Tigray regions. Ethiopians and the international alike cannot forget why and where the current war engulfing Ethiopia began. It started in Oromia, against Oromo and pro-federalist forces.

In early July, [OLLAA published a Resolution of the Oromo Communities](#) after an urgent meeting was held following the recapturing of Mekelle, the capital City of the Tigray region, by the Tigray Liberation Front. The Resolution summarized the dialogue from groups and communities from the United States and Germany who met on June 30 to discuss the subsequent threats to the Oromo people in the aftermath of the takeover in Mekelle and the ceasefire announced by the Ethiopian government.

The conclusion of that Resolution included four statements, each of which emphasized transparent dialogue between all parties. This is especially important for the Oromo people as they are the majority population of Ethiopia, but have continued to be excluded from national dialogue.

Today, July 27, 2021, the Unrepresented Nations and People Organization (UNPO) published a report for the first time of the July 1, 2021 meetings that outlines those present and the topics of discussion: “The event brought together European Parliamentarians with a panel combining leaders of civil societies who represented the following communities: Agew, Amhara, Benishangul, Oromo, Kemant, Sidama, Somali and Tigrayan. Speakers were asked to discuss best practices, challenges, and possible election-related irregularities that they might have witnessed. The event was organized in three core sections: (1) opening statements of European Parliamentarians; (2) testimony from Ethiopian civil society representing different ethnic groups; and (3) a discussion on the ability of different communities to work together.” The detailed report, entitled “[Electoral Debrief: A dialogue with civil society community representatives on the recent Ethiopian elections](#),” is also included in the article and can be found [here](#).

Sadly, a few days ago, the [World Peace Foundation](#), published an article entitled, “Reflection by concerned Ethiopians to Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Amhara state, and Tigray state.” The World Peace Foundation fails to mention the Oromos, who were the first and main target of Abiy and the Amhara state. OLLAA believes it is imperative to remember where Abiy began the war against pro-federalist forces. He started the war: popular Oromo singer Hachalu Hundessa was killed, likely by Abiy forces. Thousands of the most vocal opposition leaders, including Jawar Mohammed, have been arrested. Over the past year, thousands of political opponents remain in prison and the war has continued in many parts of Oromia even though it is



## Oromo Legacy Leadership and Advocacy Association

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not receiving the attention it deserves. It is imperative to keep in mind Oromia is home to over 70% of Ethiopia's population and to which over 50 million of them are Oromos.

OLLAA emphasizes that without the inclusion of Oromo groups it is impossible to have peace in Ethiopia, and subsequently within the Horn of Africa. OLLAA applauds the World Peace Foundation for the work that they do, including their opening statement: “We, the concerned Ethiopians, with many years of public service to our beloved nation, from diverse backgrounds and identities, and with different political leanings, share a common conviction that we must speak out publicly and urgently about the crisis facing our country.” It is imperative, however, that a statement such as this explicitly names *all* of these groups that “share a common conviction.” Nowhere in their nearly 2000-word reflection are the Oromo people mentioned. This is disgraceful.

OLLAA urges that the Oromo people are given their rightful place within the national dialogue if Ethiopia is to ever see peace or stability. The violence in Tigray has spread throughout the country. The World Peace Organization writes that “The ongoing war in northern Ethiopia has reached a point of no return. The coming chapter, we fear, will be apocalyptic.” All groups in Ethiopia face that same apocalyptic chapter. All groups in Ethiopia demand to be heard. All groups deserve a seat at the table to do whatever is possible to stop the carnage.

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