



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OLLAA Briefs USAID

Falls Church, Virginia (08/11/2021) - On Wednesday, August 11, 2021, members of the Oromo Legacy, Leadership & Advocacy Association (OLLAA) and Oromo Community organizations leaders met virtually with representatives from USAID to discuss the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia and the corruption of the Ethiopian government, as well as the role of civic/nonprofit organizations the and the United States government in helping to establish peace.

Speakers included Retired US Navy Commander, Emmanuel Bedaso, Dr. Jamal Turbi and Professor Ezekiel Gebissa of Kettering University, who established the historical context of the current power struggle within Ethiopia.

OLLAA also provided USAID with supplemental documents that include statistics and background information regarding the increased violence in exclusively Wollo areas, where OLLAA has been able to compile facts from earlier this year, including civilians who have been killed and imprisoned by the Ethiopian government.

OLLAA is a human rights organization dedicated to amplifying human rights violations and encouraging democratic participation. As we all know, Ethiopia is going through a difficult time as it edges towards the precipice of total civil war. Since this time last year, OLLAA has held three panel discussions with as many as eight ethnic groups on each panel, representing over 80 percent of the Ethiopian population. In addition to civic society organization, we have held discussions with two top opposition party leaders. OLLAA also recently raised \$5000 to support Internally Displaced Persons (IDPS) in Wollo alone. Currently, we have four staff members providing us data from on the ground in various parts of Oromia.

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. 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 tentatively organizing another vital dialogue on Monday, August 30, 2021 entitled, A Vision for a New Ethiopia: A Conversation or an in-person dialogue in late September. Once again, our intention is to create a level playing field for representatives of all Ethiopians, establishing fair ground to discuss the future of the country, as well as the concerns of all parties. Most of all, we look forward to a conversation that, ultimately, centers around hope. OLLAA has invited USAID to join for the event. OLLAA sees it as a priority to collaborate with other organizations whose missions align with ours so that together we can all be a force for change.

OLLAA looks forward to partnering with USAID in the future to support those on the ground who embody our unified goals.