



Oromo Society of Science and Technology, OSST

July 2020

Press release

Condemnation of the assassination of Hacaalu Hunddeessa, the iconic Oromo artist, human rights activist, and a family man



Hacaaluu Hunddeessa, the iconic Oromo singer and superstar, who was a brilliant and gifted freedom song writer, a fearless and unapologetic Oromo rights defender was silenced by a single bullet on June 29, 2020 on a street of Finfinne (Addis Ababa). That single bullet which killed Hacaaluu, indiscriminately wounded Oromos from all regions and around the globe. Our wounds are so deep that no time can ever hill them. Of course, the psychological

damage we suffered is not collateral, it was deliberate, it was designed and executed for maximum shock among Oromos, as the events following the assassination are indicating. This heinous crime, elaborately planned assassination has achieved an impact beyond what it was initially planned for. Instead of silencing the Oromo voice as it was intended to, it has resulted in popular up rise, rocking the state to its foundation, creating a dangerous situation the government might not any more able to control. The closure of all Oromo owned TV stations, and media outlets and the instant and summarily imprisonment of champions of Oromo human rights and opposition party leaders in the same breath in hundreds is an indicative of a law and order deficit and the absence of any semblance of justice.

The circumstances leading up to Hacaaluu's assassination, the threats he has been receiving from many comers, including the highest office of the land and the dark corners of the internet were worrisome. The orchestration of an open war on him by the anti-Oromo mass media outlets were all clear indications of what was to come. Some were calling for his physical elimination, which are now public records, not because he did anything wrong except that he expressed his view on the state of Ethiopia's unpleasant political history on a public television. What is even more disturbing is the distance the Government of Ethiopia went to deny the Oromo nation the opportunity to give Hacaaluu the send-off tribute that fit his heroic stature.

Today, after a little over one week of rage, anger, frustration, and a loss of more than 350 innocent precious lives and more than 5000 imprisoned, the Oromo people is in a virtual lockdown in fear of the government security forces murdering even more people, under the cover of information blackout. Our organization is dismayed by the lack of responsibility on the part of the Ethiopian government

and by the bizarre charges brought against prominent Oromo opposition leaders such as Jawar Mohamed, Bekele Gerba, Gemechu Itana and many other Oromo opposition leaders and activists are continuing to be indiscriminately hoarded to unknown prisons.

The government is willy-nilly assigning blames and is not interested in finding who the real assassins are. This is despite all the evidential facts that the call for Hacaaluu's elimination was coming from the sympathizers of old monolithic imperial Ethiopia, living at home and abroad. The entire Oromo nation is asking for a justice to be served and those responsible to face justice. Our organization strongly condemns the killing of Hacaaluu and all the coverups and calls for an independent and thorough investigation of the case.

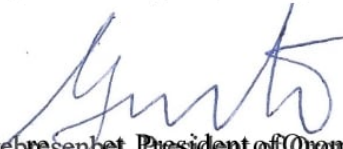
As scientists, educators, engineers, humanities, experts, doctors, etc. we value every life, we respect not only the laws of nature but the norms of human cultures, traditions, and our respective religious teachings of our conscience. The actions taking place currently in Ethiopia by the government in the name of law and order has neither the semblance of law nor that of order.

After Hacaaluu's death, the government's shock-and-awe campaign to silence the grieving nation has resulted in hundreds of additional lives lost and wounded at the hands of security forces who are authorized to shoot and kill indiscriminately. The Oromo Society of Science and Technology believes that all lives are equally precious and this killing spree by the government security under the information blackout should stop immediately.

In view of the above, we call on all peace-loving communities around the world to take note of the daily gross innumerable human rights violations in Oromia, being committed under the watch and direct order of the 2019 Nobel Prize winner, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Colonel Dr Abiy Ahmed.

Our Organization demands that the Ethiopian government:

- Allow independent investigation into Hacaaluu Hundessa's assassination
- Stop the killing spree raging across Oromia
- Stop the ongoing mass incarceration of opposition party leaders and members.
- Release all political prisoners such as Bekele Gerba, Jawar Mohammad and others
- Restore the internet service
- Initiate negotiated political settlement with all stakeholders with legitimate demands instead of trying the failed policy of repression and authoritarian rule



Prof. Girma Gebresenbet, President of Oromo Society of Science and Technology
On behalf of the Board of Directors