

For Immediate Release

Washington, D.C – August 18, 2021

A coalition of Oromo advocacy and human rights organizations based in the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia have deliberated and issued key recommendations based on careful analysis and assessment of both the war and the current state of affairs in Ethiopia. Emphasizing the gravity of the situation and recognizing that some important conditions have gone unnoticed by international observers, this coalition calls for inclusive solutions. These recommendations offer a fresh approach intended to reignite the countrywide drive for democracy that created the political opening in 2018. The coalition recognizes that a transition to democracy has not occurred and cannot take place without the input of marginalized peoples and youth who were able to topple a repressive regime and break the mold of Ethiopian politics to deliver this once-in-a-generation opportunity.

Oromo Advocacy and Human Rights Groups Call for Inclusive Ceasefire Negotiations and Dialogue in Ethiopia

We, a coalition of Oromo advocacy and human rights groups with knowledge, lived experiences, and expertise in Ethiopian affairs, make the following recommendations to all countries, international organizations, multinational corporations, and other stakeholders with an interest in peace and stability in the Horn of Africa region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Support steps to bring about an immediate ceasefire throughout the country, which shall include

- A halt to hostilities in all impacted regions of Ethiopia and a call for civil discourse that prepares a path toward a negotiated agreement that includes parties representing all the affected areas: Tigray, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Afar, Oromia, Sidama, Somali, SNNPR, Gambella;
- A return of foreign and regional armed forces engaged in combat to their respective bases, either regional state or sovereign state;
- An end to military command posts and martial law throughout the country, and the return of military forces to barracks to allow civilian administration to be put into place;
- And an immediate end to 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.

Take deliberate steps toward preparing and convening an inclusive Dialogue for the purpose of designing a comprehensive transition to democracy and stability in Ethiopia, through a process that acknowledges the need for civic engagement and active participation of politically and economically disadvantaged peoples and youth. An effective, coordinated movement of Oromo youth from 2014-2018, joined by youth of other nations, led to the collapse of the

previous government and created a once-in-a-generation opening for the introduction of democracy in Ethiopia. But that transition has been aborted, and the pro-democracy youth attacked as adversaries of Ethiopian political elites and of the Prosperity Party. An inclusive Dialogue is needed to restart the process.

- The Dialogue must be all-inclusive, participatory, and transparent.
- All political prisoners must be released without delay or preconditions.
- Oromo entities, e.g., Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC) and Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), who have integral connections with the youth whose nonviolent protests were based in civil society; as well as groups representing all nations in Ethiopia; must play prominent roles in defining the parameters of the Dialogue, such as venue, timetable, convener, pace, conduct, and implementation of agreements reached among parties to the deliberations.
- Preliminary discussions, such as those currently in progress at the European Parliament under the auspices of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO), must be encouraged.

Coalition of Advocacy and Human Rights Groups – Signatories

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