



For Immediate Release
Call for Accountability and Justice
Monday, February 14, 2022

አምባ/Amhara Professionals Association (APU) has become aware of several reports regarding recent mass killings of Amhara citizens in the East Wollega, West Shewa and other Zones of the so-called Oromia Region of Ethiopia. Having examined several accounts from IDPs who narrowly escaped massacres and other horrific crimes, along with examining reports of atrocities, we have arrived at the following key conclusions:

- **The crimes committed against Amharas are in fact genocidal acts targeting unarmed Amhara civilians who are residents of the Oromia Region, simply on the basis of their ethnicity.**
- **The Oromia Regional Government has repeatedly failed to protect Amhara citizens in several zones of the Oromia Region, especially in districts collectively known as *Wollega* (also transliterated *Wellega* or *Welega*) including East, West, Horo Guduru and Kelem Wollega Zones and other areas.**
- **Genocidal acts against Amhara civilians are being facilitated by government officials within the federal, and Oromia regional branches of the government, colluding with designated terrorist groups and other violent armed groups including the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Oromo Liberation Army/Front (OLA/F).**
- **The federal and regional governments have abdicated their primary duty to protect all citizens in their dominion, and willfully subjected citizens to inhumane conditions such as the massacre of villagers by rounding them up indoors and burning them alive, waiting to shoot survivors who manage to escape in the back.**
- **Victims have repeatedly been searched to ensure they are not concealing weapons and are thus unable to defend themselves. The few armed farmers were deliberately disarmed by the regional security forces and administrators. This made these victims vulnerable targets for terrorist attacks.**
- **The federal government and ministry of justice has undermined its mission to enforce law and order, and hold criminals accountable by releasing: a) TPLF officials who were implicated in historic and recent crimes against humanity including genocide against various groups, widespread rape as a weapon of war, deliberate and systematic destruction of towns, villages, and properties in the Amhara, Afar and Tigray Regions of Ethiopia, and b) Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC) officials who were responsible for inciting and orchestrating large-scale massacres and extensive human rights violations against ethnic Amhara, Orthodox Christian and other ethnic or religious groups, in the Oromia Region and elsewhere in Ethiopia.**

We find it extremely disturbing and uncharacteristic of any government to engage in the behaviors described above against its own citizens while promoting slogans of regional stability and unity. Listed below are some of the reports by survivors:



- The Amhara Genocide in Wollega has gotten progressively worse over the last four years. Innocent ethnic Amhara farmers, young children, the elderly, newborn babies, and pregnant women have been brutally slaughtered in cold blood. In addition to causing severe bodily injuries, and death, the extremist, armed Oromo ethno-nationalist groups and mobs of militant youth who identify as *Qeerroos* have been perpetrators of human rights violations including killings and harassing farmers, priests, after stealing their cattle and burning their homes. Another example of the ethnic-based targeting was the Oromia regional administration has forced non-Afan Oromo-speaking Orthodox Christian priests into praying in Afan Oromo instead of the centuries-old liturgical language *Ge'ez*.
- Survivors recount horrific accounts of *Qeerroos* and Oromia special police forces actively collaborating with the OLA/F to prevent ethnic Amharas from escaping after separating them from ethnic Oromo residents. The reports also describe horror stories of rounding up ethnic Amhara residents, locking them in houses and burning them alive, and those that manage to escape the fire are shot and killed.
- Women and girls of various age groups were killed, raped, beaten, mutilated and left for dead. In many instances, survivors testified the Oromo militants separated and threatened intermarried Amhara-Oromo couples.
- The local administrators, perpetrators and their collaborators are often heard using dehumanizing and derogatory language in Afan Oromo, including likening ethnic Amharas to “monkeys inhabiting a large tree” with the tree representing the Oromia region which they believed had to be ethnically homogenous, meaning Amharas and non-Oromo had to be ethnically cleansed. In other instances, genocidal references such as “sheep for the slaughter” are used.
- Local youth groups celebrate these killings while participating in coordinated lootings, attacks, and blood sacrifice rituals. There have also been reports of cannibalism and drinking the blood of deceased victims.
- IDPs currently sheltered in Debre Birhan town (Amhara Region) are injured and traumatized after having narrowly escaped the OLA/F’s terrorist acts, including massacres, machete attacks, summary executions, and burning people alive. IDPs are in dire need of food, medicine, proper shelter, clothing, and other forms of humanitarian relief.
- Thousands are sheltered in a makeshift, overly crowded IDP camp with only the clothes on their backs. They are surviving because of the generosity of the local host community with no significant support from the federal or regional government or other sources of humanitarian relief. The camps lack proper sanitation facilities to accommodate the number of IDPs being temporarily settled. Children and elders are suffering from preventable transmittable diseases due to poor hygiene and lack of supplies.



- The Amhara Regional Government has not given any attention to Amhara citizens living outside of its territory. Neither the federal nor the regional governments appear to be giving attention to the numbers and status of the survivors, nor is it expending any significant humanitarian assistance efforts to IDPs.
- According to survivor accounts, up to 5 million Amharas are facing an active siege and blockade in the Wollega area alone. Although there have been numerous attempts to assist the civilians under siege, the area is blockaded by OLA/F militants and Oromia special forces which has prevented any efforts to reduce the human suffering. The IDPs are making pleas to the government on behalf of the people who are trapped in East Wollega, to get them to safety.

APU hereby calls for the following immediate actions to establish peace and prevent further loss of life:

1. The Amhara and Oromia regional governments, as well as the federal government, must take action to protect civilians under siege by violent armed groups, provide humanitarian relief to IDPs and those in need, allow access to blockaded areas and provide safe passage for civilians out of rebel-controlled areas.
2. The federal government must immediately take action to end the war that is continuously being waged on the Amhara and Afar people by the TPLF and OLA/F terrorist groups including protecting civilians from harm.
3. The security, safety, and well-being of IDPs throughout Amhara, Afar, Oromia, Benishangul-Gumuz and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regions must be considered issues of the highest priority. Restitution of losses and respect for human life must take precedence over city and park beautification projects.
4. Amharas currently being held hostage in Wollega and adjacent districts in the Oromia Region must be immediately evacuated to safety with full compensation for lost lives and property, as these citizens lived in these lands for several decades before the current apartheid system came into existence.
5. For the Ethiopian government to guarantee the rights of all its citizens, it must deal appropriately with terrorist organizations within its borders, as well their arms outside of Ethiopia, and all agents of these organizations that are within the current Ethiopian government at various levels and in advisory positions.
6. To quote the Prime Minister himself from his historic speech, "the government was the terrorist". We believe, without any doubt, that the government still needs to rid itself of these terrorist acts and behaviors.
7. For the government of Ethiopia to behave in accordance with international standards, and to uphold the rights of all its citizens equally, without partiality to any specific group.
8. For the government of Ethiopia to condemn and abandon all forms of discriminatory and predatory land grab and to equitably manage the wealth and resources of the country for the benefit of all its citizens.

Washington D.C. – Monday, February 14, 2022