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Tigray External Affairs Office

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Statement in Support of the Oromo People’s Fight for Freedom

The people and Government of Tigray stand shoulder to shoulder with the Oromo people as they wage a valiant struggle for their freedom, and rights of self-determination and self-administration that are enshrined in the FDRE constitution. As the victims of the Abiy regime's premeditated campaign to annihilate them, the people and Government of Tigray have a great appreciation for the Oromo people's fight for their right to survive as a people. For that reason, the people and Government of Tigray stand unequivocally with the Oromo people as they exercise their legitimate right of self-defense.

Since Abiy Ahmed's assumption of power, Ethiopia has been lurching from crisis to crisis without respite. The regime, determined to centralize and consolidate power, has been waging nonstop war against all forces committed to the preservation of Ethiopia's multinational federal dispensation. As a result, Ethiopia finds itself in an endless cycle of violence, pushing the state to the brink of irreversible failure. As the capacity of the state to manage and prevent conflicts wanes, the spread of violent communal conflicts has become part of Ethiopia's tragic existence under Abiy Ahmed's deplorable reign.

Together with the people of Tigray and other federalist forces across Ethiopia, the Oromo people have consistently stood against the Abiy regime's relentless assault on the constitutional foundation of Ethiopia's federal system. As the embodiment of the Oromo people’s fundamental devotion to Ethiopia’s continuity as a multinational federation, the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) has been spearheading the resistance to the regime’s unrelenting degradation of the constitutional order.

Since 2019, the Abiy regime has undertaken a series of vicious military crackdowns in Oromia. The regime has deployed euphemistic language — “law enforcement operations”— to justify the murderous rampage and destruction inflicted on the Wallaggaa, Shawaa, Gujii, and Borana areas of Oromia. To justify its wanton destruction of Oromia cities and the mass murder of innocent civilians, the regime proclaims a state of emergency to bypass legal and constitutional constraints on state action. Indeed, Oromia has been under de facto military rule since Abiy’s ascension to the premiership. The OLA has been fighting against the tyrannical Abiy regime’s attempt to suppress the Oromo people’s hard-won rights.

The Abiy regime has since reprised its destructive campaign in Tigray, committing unconscionable crimes, such as rampant extrajudicial killings, ethnic cleansing, the use of sexual violence and gender-based attacks as a tool of war, the siege-starvation of millions of Tigrayans, and ethnic cleansing, all of which are part of its genocidal blueprint to exterminate the people of Tigray. In addition to the mobilization of armed domestic allies, the Abiy regime invited an alien invading force—the criminal Eritrean army—to unleash unimaginable terror on the people of Tigray. The Abiy regime has also made the country a playground for Eritrean security and intelligence officers, who, having been allowed to roam freely across much of the country, are involved in illegal schemes to strip the country of its wealth. The same marauding army has now been deployed across Oromia to help end the Oromo people's struggle for dignity, freedom and survival.

In recent weeks, the Abiy regime has ramped up its indiscriminate campaign to terrorize the Oromo people into subjugation by embarking on a new round of brutal military campaign across Oromia. Designed to eliminate the OLA and, by extension, extinguish the Oromo people's yearning for freedom, the latest campaign, though guaranteed to be as futile as prior campaigns, is exacting considerable costs in both blood and treasure. Perpetually contemptuous of basic rules and norms governing conduct towards one's citizens, Abiy has deployed every destructive tool at his disposal, including armed drones, helicopter gunships and jets to eliminate freedom fighters in Oromia and preserve his regime's reign of terror.

We call on the Abiy regime to abandon its destructive obsession with force as the solution to fundamental political and ideational clashes and start treating citizens with different ideas about the nature of state-society relationships with the dignity and respect that they deserve. In addition, the people and Government of Tigray are of the firm belief that only a genuine, all-inclusive national dialogue in which all relevant stakeholders partake is the only viable way out of the vexing socioeconomic and political predicament the country finds itself in.

