



Statement on civilian attacks in the Amuru district of Horo Guduru zone of western Oromia

September 5, 2022

Macha Tulama Association (MTA) is alarmed and deeply concerned about the recent massacre and displacement of civilians in the Amuru district of Horo Guduru zone of western Oromia. On August 30, 2022, armed gangs of the Amhara militia and Fanno crossed over from the Gojam zone of the Amhara region into Amuru district and indiscriminately opened fire on defenseless civilians, killing reportedly 65 and forcing thousands to flee the area.

MTA condemns violence against civilians in the strongest terms and calls on the international community to do the same. As of today, the regional government of Oromia or the Federal Government has not issued any statement or explanation for the attack. The Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRC) has also remained silent about the attack and has not issued any condemnation. MTA believes the government of Ethiopia, or the EHRC lacks the will and morale to launch any credible investigation into the attack and calls on independent international organizations such as Human Right Watch and Amnesty International to conduct a thorough and swift investigation.

So far, local and state media have not reported on the massacre except Finfinne Integrated Broadcasting which reported on the attack and was issued a stern warning letter by the Broadcasting Authority of Ethiopia for supposedly spreading a “rumor” and inciting conflict. This is further substantiating that the regime of Abiy Ahmed is condoning the merciless attack and protecting the criminals. Locals interviewed by international and diaspora-based media outlets spoke of the horror of being left defenseless when local government security abruptly left the area a day before the attack.

This latest attack in the Amuru district is not an isolated incident, or the first-time civilians have been attacked by well-armed and organized militias from the Amhara region across the border. A similar incident happened in August 2021 in an adjacent zone of Kirammu, where over 100 lives were lost due to attacks by the Amhara militia. At the time, EHRC and the local Prosperity Party administrators blamed the attack on their boogymen “OLF-Shane,” a term the government uses to refer to Oromo Liberation Army (OLA). OLA called for an independent investigation immediately and denied any involvement in targeting civilians. Still, the regime of Ethiopia has ignored the repeated calls for UN-led independent investigations and refused to give access to aid organizations to the areas affected and to provide aid to the several thousand internally displaced following the attacks.

MTA in the past has made repeated calls to the international community to pressure the Ethiopian regime to end the cycle of state-sanctioned violence on civilians. The latest attack in the Amuru district should not be seen as an isolated incident but a pattern of a systematic attack on civilians, especially in the Oromia region, by groups organized and armed by the Ethiopian regime directly or indirectly.

Therefore, MTA holds the regional governments of Amhara and Oromia accountable for their involvement in the attack on civilians through proxy groups. Attacks on civilians in any part of Oromia and Ethiopia should be swiftly condemned by international organizations and governments with leverage over the Ethiopian regime. MTA also calls on Oromos and friends of the Oromo people to stand

together to denounce the merciless attack on civilians all over Oromia and the latest attack in the Amuru district.

Board of Directors of MTA (USA)