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**Association of the Oromo Community in
Denmark**

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Dorte Neimann
Secretariat for the Foreign Affairs Committee
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Dear Mrs. Dorte,

We, members of the Oromo Community in Denmark, would like to bring to your attention the Massacre of the Oromos in Western Oromia regional zone of Ethiopia.

It was by systematic instigation of the TPLF/Ethiopian regime that deadly conflict broke out last month between the Gumuz and the Oromos around the area mentioned above.

The Oromo and Gumuz peoples have lived together as good neighbours for centuries. They are culturally intermingled and share valuable social, political and economic set-ups. It is these mutually interdependent peoples that were made to turn against each other.

Conflicts have been reported in several parts of East Wallaga of regional state of Oromia. Highly affected are:

(1) Saasiggaa district, Particularly Haroo Waataa, Camp 4, Camp 8, and Baloo villages;

(2) Limmu Districts, particularly Arqumbee village, Ambo 7 and Mandar (village) 10. From May 17 to May 19, 2008 the Gumuz militia, from regional state of Benshangul/Gumuz, attacked unarmed Oromo civilians mercilessly by burning down their Houses, indiscriminately killing and amputating elders and children and forcing thousands to flee their homes.

According to information we received through international media like the Voice of America /VOA Afaan Oromo and Amharic service, about 400 people are estimated to have been killed out of which about 65 are from Haroo Waataa village of Saasiggaa alone. Only 115 dead bodies were found and buried in just four mass graves. The remaining bodies are either burned by the perpetrators or eaten

by dogs and Hyenas. Over 12000 people are believed to have left their homes and are camped in Naqamtee town and at a primary school in Saasiggaa district.

The people from around the conflict hit area have expressed their worries on the Voice of American Radio, East African service section that, hospitals only accept those who are on the verge of dying while those who are severely injured are being turned down. Thousands of peoples are living in an open Soccer field, away from the centre of the conflict areas, where they hope to seek refuge, with no money or food to survive. According to the information we received, the Ethiopian Red Cross is providing minimum basic life saving assistance to the victims.

While The Oromos are exclusively disarmed by the incumbent regime since 1991, on the other hand, this regime is also well aware that the Gumuz militia are said to be so heavily armed that the local police could not hold them off. We think this is a systematic Genocide committed against the Oromo people by putting them in a defenceless situation.

The conflict is still spreading to other areas in the region such as Diggaa district, Arjoo, Guddatu and Diimtuu areas.

Ever since the TPLF/EPRDF led minority regime came to power in 1991, Ethiopia made customary to terrorize, jail, murder and rob the Oromo people under every possible pretext. On top of this, the Ethiopian regime's track record of the past 17-years reveals that the regime pursues a malicious divide and rule policy by instigating a chain of conflicts between Sidama and Oromos, Somalis and Oromos, Gedewos and Oromos, Anyuwak and Nuers, Oromo and Afar, Oromo and Konsos, Oromo and Amharas, and currently between Gumuzis and Oromos.

To portray that what is going on is a systematic policy of Meles Zenawi, one can see a few of the iceberg.

1. In April this year, the TPLF instigated a conflict between two brotherly nations of Sidama and Oromos at Wando Gannat, in southern Ethiopia, that ravaged the lives of more than 40 Oromos.
2. In January this year, the TPLF army murdered Oromo refugees in Somalia Putland (Bosasso). It also kidnapped several Oromo refugees in Nairobi, Kenya, and Sudan.
3. In December 2005 the Ethiopian armed force massacred indiscriminately hundreds of Anuak people in Gambella region and tens of thousands had to seek refuge in the neighbouring country, Sudan;
4. On March 10,2003 the Ethiopian Army shot indiscriminately peacefully demonstrating people in the town of Teppi,
5. On May 24, 2003 the Ethiopian armed force brutally massacred mass demonstrators of Sidama people in the town of Awasaa.

The people in the State of Oromia and other regions of Ethiopia are currently facing a well planned and well executed punishment from famine, daily detentions and disappearances and extra-judicial killings well documented by human rights offices.

Thanks to the international media, like the BBC, CNN, Reuters, VOA, etc. more people around the world are watching the terrifying pictures that show emaciated and famished children, and also reading heart wrenching stories of people trekking the land in search of food carrying their dying children. Indications are that what we see is only the tip of the iceberg and only severe conditions and accessible cases are exploding on the media

No one has access to places like the Ogaden region, where government collective punishment, ban on international aid agencies such as the Red Cross, and the failure of rain, have created a perfect storm for mass death.

The number of people going without food for days at a time and severe conditions of hunger come from all corners of the country, rural and urban, including Addis Ababa, where the majority of the

city dwellers, we are finding out, are living under gruelling starvation. Meles Zenawi's government wants to make it look like that this is occurring in some "pockets" of the country, in a language quite reminiscent of the preceding governments. The TPLF and its cadres are angrily complaining that a report by international aid agencies that six million children are under severe malnutrition is exaggerated and think it is only 75,000 children and they are debating as if the number is static. While on the other hand, just last week TPLF officials said that there are 4.5 million people who need emergency food aid.

If skeletal children are showing up around Shashemane and Arsi, in one of the most productive and wettest parts of Oromia region, it is not hard to imagine what it would look like in the more arid areas where rainfall fluctuation is more recurrent. May be at this time people are not dying in mass and this may not be technically called famine, but it is not hard to imagine the magnitude of the suffering and the kind of hellhole most Ethiopians currently encountered.

We members of the Oromo community in Denmark full-heartedly admire and appreciate the relentless effort of Denmark to preserve peace and security all over the world.

Consequently, we cordially appeal to you to intervene on universal humanitarian grounds and basic values agreed between your government and Ethiopia that we believe is based on the respect for human rights and good governance.

We have no doubt that the intervention, consultation and Hearings organised by Foreign Affairs committee in the Folketing will save many lives of the Oromo people.

We would also appeal to you as the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Danish Parliament to be the voice of the voiceless Oromos through all possible means at your disposal, to influence your Government, and to inquire EU which is the biggest donor of Ethiopia:

- To exert all necessary pressures on the TPLF regime to desist from its inhuman and destructive policies of deliberately setting the people it purports to govern against each other.
- To monitor and implement unilateral and bilateral agreements signed with Ethiopia regarding the respect for human right, democracy and good governance.
- To put pressure on Ethiopia that this case be investigated by non-partisan international body.
- To influence your Government and Non-Government Aid Agencies and Credit Institutes to stop financing the regime that is committing genocide against the Oromo and other peoples in Ethiopia.
- To facilitate through NGOs a direct humanitarian aid to rehabilitate the survivors of genocide.

With Sincere Respect,
The Association of the Oromo
Community in Denmark.

