
REPORT 63

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War on Oromia: ENDF kills civilians to attack OLA; Fano kills civilians in ethnic cleansing

OSG Report 63 includes only a small fraction of human rights abuses meted out to ordinary people in Ethiopia.

In the last few days, among the killings and disappearances by government and Fano forces, is the publicly announced execution of four young Oromo, qeerroo, in Dembi Dollo, West Wallega (p.23), the execution of another five young men in East Showa (p.14) and the burning at the stake of a farmer in West Showa (p.16).

Oromo farmers and other civilians living in zones of Wallega (pp.20-32) and Showa (pp.13-16) in Oromia Region, in Wollo, Amhara Region (p.17), and in Metekel zone, Benishangul-Gumuz Region (pp.33-34), have been killed, usually in brutal fashion, by Fano Amhara nationalist brigades, now being trained in Eritrea. Unspeakable acts of depravity including decapitation, dismemberment and gang-rape in front of victims' families are reported where Fano and ENDF are active.

Other Oromo farmers and civilians have been killed by ENDF in sweeps following military activity against OLA, in West Wallega and West Showa, Guji and Borana. Karraayyu Oromo pastoralists in East Showa have been killed by Fano as well as by regional and federal security forces.

Although the OLF leaders are no longer being held in a secret location, their plight is dire. Now in failing health, they remain illegally and arbitrarily detained political prisoners, as detailed by Human Rights Watch (p.18).

Ethiopia is poised to disintegrate as a state. If the country is to avoid becoming another Yugoslavia or Somalia with a complete breakdown of law and order and disregard for human rights and lives, there must be internationally supported and independently mediated negotiations.

Negotiations must include the Oromo Liberation Army, registered Oromo political parties (Oromo Liberation Front and Oromo Federalist Congress), relevant Oromo and non-Oromo non-governmental organisations, Amhara and other Region representatives and the Prosperity Party government of Abiy Ahmed.

Hundreds of thousands have already died and scores of thousands more will die with every month until there is peace in Ethiopia.

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Introduction

Ethiopia's viability; interruption of food aid; starvation; State Department U-turn

As Prof. Alex de Waal wrote in November 2021:¹

Abiy inherited a state, dreamed of an empire, and will be remembered for having destroyed both.

According to the former UN news agency *New Humanitarian*, on 1 August,² Ethiopia is in dire straits. PM Abiy Ahmed has overseen Ethiopia's rapid and record economic growth over three decades crumble away into nothing in his short time in office.

With inflation over 30% last year, 20 million (out of 120 million) in need of food aid, and soaring food prices; rates of poverty now exceed those in 2015/2016 in every region. In Finfinnee/Addis Ababa the poverty rate rose by a third from 2016 to reach 24% in 2022. Unsurprisingly, in Tigray the poverty rate increased from 27% to 45% in the same period.

The Tigray war killed 600,000 civilians (and almost as many combatants), caused \$22 billion worth of damage and cost \$6 billion in productivity, over one quarter of Ethiopia's GDP, in the first year of the war alone.

So many were killed that body disposal sites have been dug up and corpses burnt to hide evidence of atrocities.³ Almost 10% of women in Tigray were raped during the war, mostly by gangs of combatants.⁴

Most (5.4 million) of Tigray's 6 million population rely on food aid, but even this was stopped in March due to corruption. At the end of July, over one million remained displaced in Tigray.⁵ Another 1.26 million were recently returned former IDPs, and in Amhara Region, there are 580,000 IDPs and thousands of refugees arriving from Sudan.⁶

According to East African Medical Relief Foundation, there are 1.2 million IDPs in the four Wallega zones alone (see below, p.11).

Hundreds have died and are dying of starvation in Tigray and elsewhere. Over 1400 died in Tigray by August, after the food was stopped in March.⁷ Malnutrition rates have soared in Tigray, Oromia, Amhara, Somali and other regions. In Tigray, 30% of children and 71% of pregnant and lactating women screened in health centres were malnourished.

In most regions of Ethiopia, food aid is only now resuming since USAID and WFP withdrew their help in March in Tigray and early June elsewhere,⁸ in response to 'widespread and coordinated' diversion of food aid to 'federal and regional government officials, private

¹ <https://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/2021/11/08/what-next-for-ethiopia/>

² https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2023/08/01/boom-bust-fallout-war-and-drought-leaves-ethiopians-mired-poverty?utm_source=The+New+Humanitarian&utm_campaign=b866907ed5-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_ENGLISH_AFRICA&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d842d98289-b866907ed5-29271461

³ <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2023/07/09/war-crimes-in-tigray-may-be-covered-up-or-forgotten>

⁴ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-465-24-July-2023.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-situation-report-27-jul-2023>

⁶ https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia/?_gl=1%2ao9iyqs%2a_ga%2aNTe3NTA4NTA1LjE2ODQyNTEwNzk%2a_ga_E60ZX2F68%2aMTY5MjYwOTcxMC4xNTQuMC4xNjkyNjA5NzE1LjU1LjAuMA

⁷ <https://borkena.com/2023/08/17/ethiopia-tigray-famine-over-1400-people-die-from-hunger-in-three-zones-of-tigray-region/>

⁸ https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2023/06/22/usaidwfp-food-aid-freeze-leads-suffering-and-deaths-tigray?utm_source=The+New+Humanitarian&utm_campaign=ff83a8cf97-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_ENGLISH_AFRICA&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d842d98289-ff83a8cf97-29271461

traders, and the army’ in seven of Ethiopia’s nine regions. The WFP country director resigned on 2 June.⁹ Eritrean military forces were also involved.¹⁰

Deliveries by WFP resumed with wheat being supplied to a mere 100,000 in Tigray by the end of July.¹¹

On 18 August, the UN reported there were 1.2 million children in Ethiopia with severe acute malnutrition.¹² In Borana and Guji zones of Oromia Region more than one in six children are moderately or severely acutely malnourished and there is a Global Acute Malnutrition rate of 19%. Half of those over 60 in Borana are malnourished.¹³ Cholera is reported from Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, Somali, Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz and SNNP Regions.¹⁴

The Tigray war caused donors to reduce support, while Ethiopia spent nearly 15% of its total budget on ‘defence’. In March, the US State Department accused all sides of war crimes and crimes against humanity, singling out Amhara region forces as guilty of ethnic cleansing.¹⁵

Desperate to maintain a positive relationship with Abiy Ahmed, in competition with China and Russia, the US government made a U-turn in late June, when the US Treasury told Congress that it no longer believed that Ethiopia was engaging in a ‘pattern of gross violations of human rights’ thereby enabling resumption of US and other international support.

Italy and the World Bank ‘pledged hundreds of millions of dollars in grants, credits, and soft loans, while Addis Ababa is currently negotiating a new package with the IMF.’

As pointed out by *New Humanitarian* this ‘suggests a readiness by the United States to drop awkward demands for justice and accountability for war crimes.’

As recently as 15 March, the State Department announced ‘The Secretary [of State] and Prime Minister [Abiy Ahmed] also discussed the importance of accountability for the atrocities perpetrated by all parties during the conflict, as well as the need for an inclusive and comprehensive process of transitional justice. The Secretary expressed concerns about the situation in Oromia and the need for a resolution through dialogue.’¹⁶

On the same day, Secretary of State Blinken announced over \$331 million in humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia through USAID.¹⁷

Meanwhile, there is insecurity across Ethiopia. As well as in Oromia and Tigray, there is killing and unrest from Gambella Region,¹⁸ in the southwest, to Somali Region in the southeast.¹⁹

⁹ <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2023/06/05/exclusive-wfp-leadership-ethiopia-resigns-amid-aid-diversion-probe>

¹⁰ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-452-15-June-2023.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-469-10-August-2023.pdf>

¹² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/08/1139907>

¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jun/09/they-are-overlooked-by-everybody-elders-in-ethiopia-bear-brunt-of-the-climate-crisis>

¹⁴ https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia/?_gl=1%2ao9iyqs%2a_ga%2aNTE3NTA4NTA1LjE2ODQyNTEwNzk.%2a_ga_E60ZNX2F68%2aMTY5MjYwOTcxMC4xNTQuMC4xNjkyNjA5NzE1LjU1LjAuMA

¹⁵ <https://www.state.gov/war-crimes-crimes-against-humanity-and-ethnic-cleansing-in-ethiopia/>

¹⁶ <https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-meeting-with-ethiopian-prime-minister-ahmed-2/>

¹⁷ <https://et.usembassy.gov/331-million-in-new-humanitarian-assistance-for-ethiopia/>

¹⁸ <https://addisstandard.com/news-nine-killed-17-injured-in-latest-violence-in-gambella-regional-govt-says-situation-under-control/>

¹⁹ <https://addisstandard.com/news-ethiopian-army-member-accused-of-killing-four-injuring-three-in-kebridehar-somali-region-opposition-onlf-urges-immediate-action/>

Western and Southern Tigray were still beyond the reach of independent monitors in July.²⁰ Eritrean soldiers remain in the Irob area of Tigray, preventing schools and health facilities from functioning and preventing the AU Monitoring and Verification Mission access. Eritrean troops re-entered Western Tigray at several points in early August.²¹

Over 552 schools in Tigray were not functioning at least up to May.²² Thousands of detained Tigrayan soldiers and civilians remain unaccounted for.²³ At least 250 Tigrayans were rounded up by Amhara police and militia and remained in detention in Western Tigray at the end of August.²⁴

OLA peace talks; violent aftermath

Peace talks between OLA and the Ethiopian government took place in Tanzania in April. Subsequent atrocities committed by ENDF against Oromo civilians indicate a lack of genuine desire for peace by the Ethiopian government.

On 10 August, *The Reporter* published an interview with Prof Merera Gudina in Amharic.²⁵ The seasoned politician, now Chairman of the Oromo Federalist Congress, listed previous power-sharing agreements with Oromo which had failed because they were not genuine. The promise of elections after three years (believed to be the offer on the table in the Tanzania talks with OLA in April) was similarly disingenuous. The following short passage is an excerpt from Prof. Merera's interview:

'for the OLA to not secure power-sharing with the government would amount to making a historical mistake in the history of the Oromo people for the fourth time. The first time was when Oromo elites that were MEISON members agreed to work with the DERG and paid dearly with their lives. They [the DERG] killed my brother too. Then there was 1991 (1983 EC) when EPRDF came to power.'

How would one expect an armed group to take such a promise seriously enough to disarm when even those of us who are engaged in peaceful struggle are not given a chance at free and fair campaigns and elections?

Power-sharing ended after one year when encamped OLF troops were attacked and the leadership forced from office and expelled from the country.

'The third instance was when the Dawud Ibsa group was invited to come home from Eritrea with a promise of a free and fair political space. The result is what you see in front of your eyes today. In Tanzania, the government tried to convince the OLA with a promise of participating in elections at a future date. How would one expect an armed group to take such a promise seriously enough to disarm when even those of us who are engaged in peaceful struggle are not given a chance at free and fair campaigns and elections? . . . The Prosperity Party is playing the same old game the EPRDF had played before it. It is pushing the younger generation to take up arms and into the jungle. If the government continues to abuse the younger generation in the cities, what are they expected to do? This is exactly why the younger generation is joining liberation fronts in droves.'

Translation by Zelalem Negassa, Oromia Global Forum.

²⁰ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-461-10-July-2023.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-468-07-August-2023.pdf>

²² <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-430-12-May-2023.pdf>

²³ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-458-29-June-2023.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.unognewsroom.org/story/en/1957/deteriorating-human-rights-situation-in-ethiopia-ohchr>

²⁵ <https://mereja.com/amharic/v2/851211>

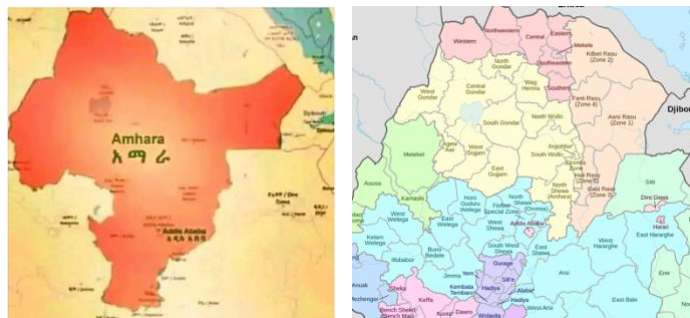
The peace talks in Zanzibar ended on 3 May. OLA announced on 17 May that a large-scale, broad military offensive had been launched against them by ENDF after the negotiations.²⁶ This was in stark contrast to the prioritisation of de-escalation understood from the talks. ENDF attacked in East and West Wallega, Horo Guduru, East and West Showa, Hararge, Borana and Guji zones. Government forces threatened farmers to provide them food, punishing them with anything from withholding government fertiliser to summary execution. OLA stated ‘The army has also forcibly drafted farmers into local militias. As they traverse the towns and villages of Oromia, the regime’s forces engage in robbery, mobile phone confiscation, and public beatings. They have set homes ablaze, ruined farms, and perpetrated horrific acts of sexual violence.’

Fano and APF; another civil war

Fano, like Qeerroo, developed during the student protests, 2014-2018. It is proudly Amhara ethno-nationalist. Unlike Qeerroo, the non-violent Oromo student movement, Fano had a military ethos from the beginning. Trained separately and less well-organised than ENDF, its brigades nonetheless have heavy artillery. Massacres of Oromo, Tigaru, Qemant, Gumuz and other peoples have been attributed to Fano since 2019. It is widely supported by the Amhara diaspora and lauded by the Amhara Association of America.

Fano militia were first reported by OSG when they were involved in the killing of at least ten injured Oromo civilians who were dragged out of an ambulance in the compound of Yfat Hospital in Showa Robit, and brutally beaten to death on 21 March 2021 (see p.17).²⁷

Eskinder Nega established the Amhara People’s (aka Popular) Front (APF) on 20 May. He is an important figure in the hierarchy of Fano and has substantial backing from the Amhara diaspora. The attribution of a map of an enlarged Amhara Region to APF has been disputed on social media, but the pro-Amhara news group, *Borkena*, shows a similarly enlarged Amhara Region including large areas of present-day Oromia, Tigray, Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz and other regions.



The map purported to have been published by APF is copied left with a similarly-scaled map showing current regional boundaries.

Amhara Region – yellow
Oromia Region – blue
Benishangul-Gumuz Region - lime
SNNPR – purple

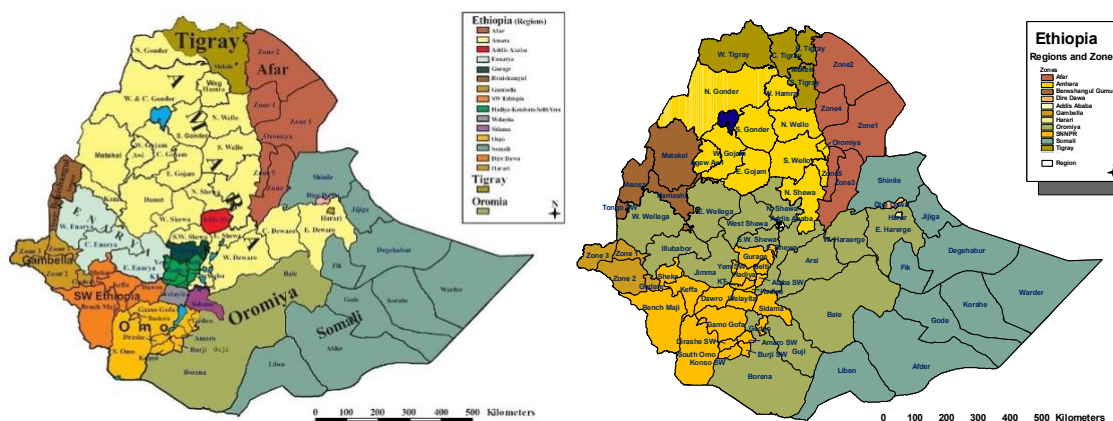
Borkena wrote on 9 May ‘It is time for Amaras to think for themselves, reject wishful thinking, and accept reality. When they accept reality, the solution is clear: claim their ancestral and historical territory, as indicated in Figure 1 [map, overpage] and start their own state, either within Ethiopia or as an independent country.’²⁸

The OCHA map is shown right for comparison. Amhara nationalists demand a region 2-3 times its present size, dwarfing even Oromia, Ethiopia’s largest and most populated region.

²⁶ [https://www.olf-olahq.org/post/regarding-peace-talks-and-the-regime-s-recent-offensives#:~:text=\(OLF%20OLA%20Press%20Release\)&text=The%20current%20offensives%20see%20designed,Hararghe%2C%20Borana%2C%20and%20Guji.](https://www.olf-olahq.org/post/regarding-peace-talks-and-the-regime-s-recent-offensives#:~:text=(OLF%20OLA%20Press%20Release)&text=The%20current%20offensives%20see%20designed,Hararghe%2C%20Borana%2C%20and%20Guji.)

²⁷ OSG Report 56, p7, <https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-56-June-2021.pdf>

²⁸ <https://borkena.com/2023/05/09/ethiopia-amara-peoples-future-leaving-the-ethiopian-federation/>



Killings of civilians, often in brutal and sadistic ways, looting of animals and property, and driving non-Amhara people from their homes and lands in acts of ethnic cleansing, have become hallmarks of Fano brigades. These operate freely within Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz regions where they are uncontested by ENDF. Cutting throats and severing heads of civilian victims are Fano trademarks (see p.29).

Fano are responsible for the ethnic cleansing of Oromo farmers from Horo Guduru and East Wallega and several zones of Showa in Oromia (pp.13,15,29) and from the Oromia Special Zone in Wollo, Amhara Region (p.17). They and ENDF have killed and uprooted thousands of Gumuz and Oromo from Metekel zone in Benishangul-Gumuz Region (pp.33-34).

Fano troops killed two Eritrean refugees in Alem Wach camp in Amhara Region at the beginning of June, after they refused to hand over their money and mobile phones. Fano were stalking markets where money transfers were given to refugees, ‘stopping anyone who had money or a mobile phone at hand.’ EEPA quoted ‘This is in part due to the government stopping the funding of Fano troops.’²⁹

Until recently, Fano enjoyed government support because it helped in attacking Tigrayan and Oromo people while the Tigray war front ebbed and flowed before the Cessation of Hostilities in November 2022.

Fano and Amhara Region militia were responsible for ethnic cleansing in Western Tigray during the war and since the ceasefire, according to Human Rights Watch. Over one thousand Tigrayans were detained in border towns and deported east of the Tekeze river after November 2022, when the peace agreement was signed, up to January 2023.³⁰ Thousands arrived in Shire in November 2022. Fano are known to have transported 2,800 adults and children from five detention sites and expelled them on 10 November.³¹

The government announced its intention to absorb all regional forces, including Fano, into national security forces in April.³² By August, about half of the members of the Amhara Region militia had joined Fano brigades.³³

Despite cooperating with ENDF in the Tigray war and in attacks on Oromo in Oromia, Fano leaders reacted to being absorbed into national security forces with violence and began

²⁹ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-448-9-June-2023.pdf>

³⁰ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/01/ethiopia-ethnic-cleansing-persists-under-tigray-truce>

³¹ <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/looting-forced-removals-plague-ethiopias-tigray-despite-truce-witnesses-2022-12-02/>

³² <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-414-20-April-2023.docx.pdf>

³³ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-468-07-August-2023.pdf>

attacking their previous partners in war. The leader of the Amhara Association of America, Tewodrose Tirfe, told *Al Jazeera* on 10 August:³⁴

The Fano, with the support of farmers and [the] Amhara public, will attempt to defeat the federal security forces and their alliance and ultimately remove Abiy from power.

Fano is supported internationally and includes trained soldiers and officers from USA and Israel.³⁵ Pitched battles between Fano and ENDF in Amhara Region saw Fano take control of Bahir Dar, (the regional capital), Showa Robit, Debrehan and the city of Gondar by 7 August. Fano fighters are being trained in Humera, Eritrea, before returning to fight ENDF. At the same time as the Fano successes, Eritrean troops re-entered Western Tigray.³⁶

A State of Emergency was declared in Amhara Region on 4 August and ENDF regained control of the towns and cities, removing Fano with the help of drones. The ENDF were conducting house-to-house searches in the cities by 10 August.³⁷ Fighting continued in the north of the region, where the killing of over 26 in government air strikes was reported on 14 August.³⁸ The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission wrote on 14 August that the use of heavy artillery killed many civilians; others attempting to block roads were killed. Fano had killed government officials, looted prisons and police stations and released over 18,000 detainees.^{39, 40, 41} Major skirmishes continue to occur.

The UN Human Rights Commissioner described a worsening situation on 29 August and stated further clashes between Fano and ENDF had resulted in 183 deaths since July.⁴²

Fano is not only fighting ENDF. On 10 August, Fano attacked Oromo civilians in Mendida, West Showa.⁴³ Attacks by Fano against Oromo civilians are described in East Showa (p.13), West Showa (p.15), Wollo (p.17), Horo Guduru and East Wallega (pp.30-33).

On 21 August, it was reported that 10,000 Amhara had been arrested in Finfinnee/Addis Ababa, in a sweep to detain suspected Fano supporters.⁴⁴ The UN Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (above) numbered the arbitrary arrests at 1000. It is noteworthy that the killing of thousands of Oromo civilians in the ongoing war in Oromia Region was not part of the UN news briefing.

Disinformation

When Fano fighters took over the Ethiopian Orthodox monastery in Debre Elias, East Gojjam zone, Amhara Region, they built fortifications and underground shelters. They were displaced by ENDF in the last week of May.⁴⁵ Over 200 were claimed by the Ethiopian government to have been killed.⁴⁶

³⁴ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/10/whats-behind-the-crisis-in-ethiopias-amhara-region-a-simple-guide>

³⁵ Sajid Nadim, Independent Journalist, 22 August 2023: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qepE8xjF84>

³⁶ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-468-07-August-2023.pdf>

³⁷ <https://www.voaafrica.com/a/ethiopia-amhara-region-calm-government-claims-militia-retreat/7219362.html>

³⁸ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/14/suspected-air-strike-kills-26-in-ethiopias-amhara-region>

³⁹ <https://ehrc.org/the-human-rights-impact-of-the-armed-conflict-on-civilians-in-amhara-regional-state/>

⁴⁰ <https://addisstandard.com/news-death-toll-from-finote-selam-airstrike-reaches-at-least-30-doctors-fear-lack-of-oxygen-may-drive-fatalities-up/>

⁴¹ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-471-17-August-2023.pdf>

⁴² <https://www.unognewsroom.org/story/en/1957/deteriorating-human-rights-situation-in-ethiopia-ohchr>

⁴³ <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/amhara-ethiopia-conflict-fano-politics-war-tigray/?one-time-read-code=230610169235166580273>

⁴⁴ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-472-21-August-2023-1.pdf>

⁴⁵ <https://addisstandard.com/news-fighting-at-local-monastery-in-amhara-region-leaves-multiple-casualties-authorities-confirm-military-action/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-444-5-June-2023.pdf>

The Amhara media disinformation machine accused ENDF of murdering two innocent monks in Debre Elias monastery and released links to a video of two men being led into a forest and executed with shots to the back of their heads. This video was analysed by *Agence France Presse* and was found to have been taken in Metekel zone, Benishangul-Gumuz Region.⁴⁷ The two victims were innocent Gumuz farmers, killed by ENDF in January 2022 (see p.34).

Hate speech

Dr Debru Negash was described as a ‘physician-pilot and an academic who has served in the United Nations as a senior medical advisor’ by *Borkena*, when he wrote a polemic against ‘loathsome America’ and Abiy Ahmed in July 2021.⁴⁸

On 10 June, a short presentation by Dr Negash appeared on Twitter.⁴⁹ In the 37-second excerpt of a presentation as a ‘Special Guest of Honour’ at an unspecified event, he says in Amharic:

‘To be as heroes as Amharas, Tigre and Galla [Oromo] are creatures that kill Amharas and drink blood. Tigre and Galla inferiority complex has no limit, that inferiority makes them like this. As I always say, these guys should have shared Amhara’s great mentality as humans but they have no ability to do so. They cannot be humans, rather they relish to kill.

We can only get rid of these people. We cannot train them. We must get rid of them. All Ethiopians should give it up. If we all are determined, we can do it within a short period of time.’



ICRC report violence has ruined Wallega, Guji and Borana water and health infrastructure; IDPs

The war in Oromia receives little coverage because attention is elsewhere and access to Oromia is so restricted. Nonetheless, OCHA, the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Ethiopia, reported on 29 May that the humanitarian situation in Wallega zones had worsened ‘in the last few months due to continued insecurity from conflict since 2020. Despite improved access, protection concerns have been reported amongst women and children displaced and exposed to different risks such as loss of families, gender-based-violence and physical injury, as well as resort to dangerous and negative coping mechanisms.’ There were reportedly ‘approximately 859,000 people displaced, tens of thousands of children out of school (damaged or closed), and high mortality and morbidity rates due to damaged health facilities and poor health services.’⁵⁰

ICRC reported on 22 June that the ongoing violence in Oromia Region had ‘taken a toll on critical infrastructure.’ Health facilities and water systems are destroyed. In Begi district,

⁴⁷ https://factcheck.afp.com/doc.afp.com.33JC4CA?fbclid=IwAR0QA_tu-I-ghWLog5XjLFwU85TPJp4lru_oX6QmjQ0o-FliqZ7tGMNfXPk

⁴⁸ <https://borkena.com/2021/07/14/loathsome-america-hands-off-ethiopia-by-debru-negash/>

⁴⁹ <https://twitter.com/gumaaoro/status/1667616394068852740?t=JU5dRPsPLpttEbHAZu8y1w&s=08>

⁵⁰ <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-situation-report-29-may-2023>

West Wallega, most of the 42 existing health centres and clinics had been looted or damaged, leaving 100,000 without acute medical care. ICRC wrote:

‘The walls of the Guduru Primary Hospital, which serves more than five districts, were riddled with bullets, and its water tank was damaged. Beds, equipment, surgical sets, medicines, and ambulances were looted. At the same time, the number of patients has drastically increased as thousands of people who fled their homes arrived in this area, making it extremely difficult for staff to provide healthcare services to the population.

“We have a shortage of emergency drugs. No operating room sets. We do not have beds. And now there is also a shortage of water supply due to the damage to the water reservoir. The community pharmacy was also destroyed, and all the drugs and materials were taken,” said Dr. Alemayehu Kiri, the hospital’s medical director.’

‘Hundreds of thousands of people in the Oromia region of Ethiopia are seriously affected by the current violence. Many of them require humanitarian assistance, and the situation could deteriorate as ongoing fighting limits aid access to many areas. The needs are particularly significant in parts of Guji, the Wellegas, and Borena.’

ICRC wrote that together with Ethiopian Red Cross they faced ‘numerous challenges in addressing the enormous needs despite the extension of operations to the western part of the Oromia region and to Guji. The capacity of the ICRC and the ERCS in Oromia is overstretched in their efforts to provide protection and assistance to populations most affected by the violence in areas that are particularly difficult to access such as Bubul, Begi and Kondole, Balo, Bareda and Kombolsha, where few if any other humanitarian organizations operate.’ ‘We have had to make difficult choices, targeting places with little presence of other humanitarian actors,’ said Julian Jaccard, the ICRC head of sub-delegation in Nekemte. ‘People in these areas have suffered immensely and for a long time.’⁵¹

One trusted local informant reported on 25 July that 5,000 civilians became IDPs in Mana Sibu district, West Wallega, after the federal government sent in militia from Benishangul-Gumuz Region to attack villages there.

OCHA wrote on 27 July that the most vulnerable were protracted IDPs. ‘They are some of the most vulnerable as they often cannot access basic services, education, and health care, and they face barriers to stable housing and sustainable livelihoods. For instance, displaced due to violence and insecurity, people in Horo Guduru, East, West, and Kellem Wellega zones in Oromia remain without humanitarian assistance due to limited access, resources, and active partners operating in the area due to lack of resources. . . . IDPs do not have access to daily basic services or livelihood activities and their movement is restricted within camps and towns due to threats of armed group movements beyond their domicile.’⁵²

⁵¹ <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/ethiopia-healthcare-crisis-oromia-exacerbated-massive-displacement>

⁵² <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-situation-report-27-jul-2023>

The Plight of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Western Oromia

The East African Medical Relief Foundation (EAMRF), with hands-on experience of working with IDPs in Western Oromia wrote the following report in July:⁵³

‘These displaced communities found themselves living in appalling conditions, with inadequate access to necessities such as medical services, sanitation, hygiene supplies, and clean water.

Overcrowded makeshift shelters became the meager refuge for over 1.5 million Internally Displaced People scattered throughout the region. The IDP camps were a stark reminder of the trauma endured by these individuals who had been forced to flee their homes, often arriving with nothing more than the clothes on their backs.’



Girja IDP camp, Guji, March 2023.

Ethiopia’s unprecedented influx of IDPs

‘Ethiopia has experienced an influx of IDPs at an alarming rate, particularly between September and December 2022. The Oromia region, especially Western and Southern Oromia, witnessed the largest concentration of IDP centers, with 141 established across the region. The four Wollega zones in Western Oromia alone accommodated 1.2 million IDPs, constituting 80% of the total IDP population in Oromia. Other IDP settlements were scattered throughout the Guji Zone and Eastern Oromia.

. . . Families had been living in these camps for up to five months, enduring cramped conditions with multiple family members sharing a single tent. The stories shared by the elders at Girja IDP site in the Guji Zone were heart-wrenching, recounting the pain of being forced to leave their homes repeatedly in the past few months. Scarce access to food and witnessing unspeakable atrocities had left the IDPs in a state of despair.’⁵⁴

EAMRF wrote that these IDP camps were set up by zonal authorities. As well as lacking enough basic necessities – shelter, water, food – there is no education for the children, who comprise 50% of IDPs. Over 30,000 were in one camp alone, in Shambu Bus Station, Horo Guduru. There are two other IDP camps in Shambu. The hospital in Shambu is poorly equipped and supplied. The smaller hospital in Gida Ayana is completely out of medicines and equipment.

The mental health of IDPs in Western Oromia is of grave concern. People fleeing Fano attacks on their homes were very often severely traumatised by the atrocities they had been forced to watch, including gang-rape, killing and mutilation of close relatives with knives,

⁵³ <https://bnn.network/breaking-news/health/east-african-medical-relief-foundation-eamrf-extends-aid-to-displaced-communities-in-western-romia-ethiopia/>

⁵⁴ <https://bnn.network/breaking-news/health/east-african-medical-relief-foundation-eamrf-extends-aid-to-displaced-communities-in-western-romia-ethiopia/>

machetes and other hand-held weapons. Those who had attempted to return were re-traumatised by bodies and body parts of loved ones still lying where they had been left.

And the trauma continues. Elders at an IDP camp in Guji zone reported being forced to move 11 times within four months.

IDPs spoke of Amhara turning on Oromo neighbours, with whom they had lived for decades and forcing them into the jungle.

One IDP said **‘Everyone asks about our condition but nobody helps’**. Elderly men among IDPs are severely depressed. One elder described losing all his land, home, farm and extended family except for one 9 year-old granddaughter. All his other relatives had either been killed or ran into the forest to join OLA. There was hardly anything of his former life remaining. There is no counselling for hundreds of thousands of traumatised uprooted people like him. Women and children IDPs are the focus of attention for NGOs. Older men, in their 70s and 80s are overlooked.

Many had walked for hours or days after leaving all they had – home, car, property, farms, shops, cattle – all destroyed or looted. Mothers were breast-feeding infants of mothers who died on the road. A significant number of young women who were victims of public gang-rape have committed suicide (for example, see p.29)

Military Command Posts

Military Command Posts were established in Oromia Region at the end of 2018 and in early 2019. Unlike the recent establishment of military rule in Amhara Region, no permission from parliament was sought or granted. In effect, every ENDF and Oromia Special Police camp is a command post.

The restrictions and their damaging effect in West Wallega are described (p.25), but there is no village or town in Oromia without checkpoints and road blocks in and out. People do not leave their homes in the dark. No-one goes out into the countryside. Farming is halted.

Schools and other buildings are commandeered as all life is interrupted and overseen. The Gudina Tumsa Foundation school in Fantale, East Showa, is now a military base. There is a pervasive sense of insecurity across the region.

Villages are isolated without internet or phone access as these services have become weaponised. ENDF and the National Security Service exert control and the population knows it. In western Oromia, people dread the resumption of internet and phone access because of its sinister association with drone bombardment (p.25).

Finfinnee/Addis Ababa and Central Oromia

Killings

Finfinnee/Addis Ababa



On 26 May, **two protestors were killed** and 40 injured when police cracked down on protestors outside the Grand Anwar Mosque in Shaggar city, the Oromia Special Zone around Finfinnee. The two young men killed were named by *Addis Standard*: **Siraj Mohammed** and **Abubeker Elias**.

On 23 May, Oromia's Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs had protested the recent illegal demolition of 19 mosques within Shaggar city alone. The public protest after prayers on Friday 26 May led to 114 arrests. Some of the injured were visited by the President of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs of Ethiopia next day in hospital.⁵⁵

OLLAA publishes a monthly list of verified extrajudicial killings. The latest report, for July 2024,⁵⁶ included the killing of **Jireenya Boja**, in Saris, Nifas Silk Lafto, Finfinnee/Addis Ababa on 24 July.

East Showa

Hawas Mato Borra, (right) a survivor from the massacre of Abaa Gadaas in Fantale district on 1 December 2021 (see OSG Report 59, pp.15-18), was **shot** by Fano militants on 12 March **and died** two days later. He was herding his cattle at Karra, near the place from where the Gadaa leaders had been abducted before being killed.⁵⁷ He and the other survivor ran while standing hooded, awaiting execution by firing squad, ordered by the Oromia Region Police Commissioner in Adama.



Other **killings** in East Showa were reported by OLLAA:

Gobu Hawile, also in Karra, Fantalle district, 24 March

In Gidira, Fantalle district, on 25 April:

Burqaa Buude

Waadoo Godaanaa

In Bole, Bosat district, on 30 April:

Abate Indaala

Jundii Amdaa

Odaa Oda'e

Mahammad Barcoo

Musxafaa Sulxaan

⁵⁵ <https://addisstandard.com/news-two-killed-dozens-injured-in-police-crackdown-against-protest-by-muslims-in-addis-abebe-more-than-100-people-detained/>

⁵⁶ https://ollaa.org/confirmed-extrajudicial-killings-in-july-2023/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=confirmed-extrajudicial-killings-in-july-2023#:~:text=Report%20on%20Extrajudicial%20Killings%20in%20July%202023&text=The%20list%20below%20highlights%20the,instances%2C%20the%20Oromia%20Police%20forces.

⁵⁷ <https://addisstandard.com/news-senior-karrayyu-gadaa-leader-survivor-of-2021-massacre-gunned-down-in-latest-clashes-residents-suffering-persistent-violence-drought/>

In Arada Anate, Liban Cuqala, at an unspecified date in May:

Charuu Machii and Qorichoo Dorfocee

In Kamisa town, Bora district, on 22 June:

Umar Hussein and Diittaa Fayyoo



On 9 September, W.1 reported that the five young men, qeerroo, pictured left and named below were detained in Dugdaa Birbirs district of East Showa and **summarily executed**:

Qajeelaa

Boonsaa

Daalee Gunjoo

Bulloo Jimaa,

Geetaachoo Gunjoo

‘All these people are dead and have no burial’ (W.1).

North and West Showa

Killings recorded by OLLAA include the following in North and West Showa:

Workine Beka, Dike, Ambo, W Showa, 23 March

Emawe Tilahun,

Tesgaye Dase and Sukare Gizaw, Jarso, Wara Jarso, N Showa, 25 March

Habtamu Dajane, Ano Dagam, Dagam, N Showa, 28 April

Guddata Kumsiisa, Gijjoo Kombe, Midagany, W Showa, 13 May

Alamayo Margee, Latu Walargi, Wara Jarso, N Showa, 14 May

Hayyamaa Sirrumaa and Mallasaa Milkeessaa, Wadesa, Ambo, W Showa, 15 May

Abarraa Haayilee, Luma Xaxesa, Meta Walqixe, W Showa, 17 May

Darajjee Daggafaa (Singer), Kajima, Sululta town, N Showa, 29 May

Tashala Sambaba, Hidabu Sandi, Ilfeta, W Showa, 29 May

Daani’el Kuusaa, Guba Jibat, Liban Jawi, W Showa, 14 June

Kaffaalee Xaafaa, Latu Walargi, Wara Jarso, N Showa, 17 June

Likkaasaa Lalisaa and Kiisaa Hirphaa, Ganji Horo, Ambo, W Showa, 19 June

Jifaaraa Boronjii, Latu Walargi, Wara Jarso, N Showa, 23 June

Damissoo Taakkuu,

Aboonaa Damisee,

Habtamu Nagasaa,

Kafanii Mul’ataa and

Abbabaa Tasammaa, Dabiso, Qarsa Malim, SW Showa, 23 June

Darajjee Abdiisa, Galesa, Jaldu, W Showa, 3 July

Shenuu Aleminee, Warqa Gara, Dandi, W Showa, 5 July

Biraanuu Raggaasaa,

Tashoomee Wardiyyee and Mangistuu Diroo, Edamsa Galan, Haldu, W Showa, 9 July

Abdiisaa Diidha, Dula, Meta Robi, W Showa, 17 July

Muluu Tolchaa, Qundi, Dagam, N Showa, 21 July

Yohaanis Jootee, Abebe town, Tole, SW Showa, 27 July.

Local informant: Government military attacks, civilian killings, Fano raid, local government corruption

North and West Showa have been occupied by Amhara and Oromo people for over 120 years, according to local informant 'M' on 15 July.

'In North and West Showa, killings of civilians by government forces far outnumber those by Fano brigades'	Informant M
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Informant M reported **killings** at the end of 2022. Within a few weeks of the year's end, government forces took **seven detainees from a prison in Biriti**, Warra Jarso district, and **ten from prison in Garba Guracha** town, the administrative centre of Kuyu district (also in N Showa), and **executed** them.

In North and West Showa, killings of civilians by government forces far outnumber those by Fano brigades. According to OSG's informant, heavily-armed government forces attacked civilians at the beginning of 2023, when an ENDF campaign began in Fiche and Dera (Darra) districts of North Showa, then about one week later in Warra Jarso district. This was followed by attacks in Daro, Hidabu and Liban Qachame (N Showa), 'Da'ee Selassie' and several attacks in Faji Ejerso (W Showa).

Attacks began with drones and heavy artillery and were followed up with ground troops. The informant estimated that the attacks in January **killed about 260 in Liban Qachame** (N Showa), **180 in Faji Ejerso** (W Showa), **45 in Dera** (N Showa), **17 in 'Daro'**, **17 in Hidabu** (N Showa) and **5 in 'Da'e Selassie'**.

In January, over 60 families in North Showa fled from Haro to Qaree Goha (also known as Goha Tsion), 40 km from the Amhara Region border in Warra Jarso district, after being attacked and having their homes burnt down. IDPs with more resources fled to Sululta, nearer to Finfinnee in the Oromia Special Zone around the capital.

The informant reported that when up to 40 farmers meet together outdoors to gather their crops communally, they attract bombardment by drones because they are suspected to be gatherings of OLA.

In mid-June, within a single weekend, two atrocities occurred in Oosee kebele, about 25 km from Garba Guracha (Kuyu district) N Showa. A **woman** bringing home oil from a market was stopped on the road by government forces, accused of feeding OLA soldiers and **killed** on the spot. Another **five women were shot dead** while tending their cattle, because 'their husbands were not there' and were therefore presumed to have joined OLA.

Also in Oosee kebele, at around the end of June, a **breast-feeding mother** was attacked by ENDF. Her baby was taken from her. Her breasts were cut off before she was **killed** by having her throat cut.

Although the majority of killings and other atrocities in North and West Showa are perpetrated by government forces (ENDF), there are also raids by Fano brigades. **Fano** fighters came to N Showa in June, entering Warra Jarso district via Goje and Aware Badada kebeles. They **killed about 200 cattle and stole another 100**.

Other killings in North and West Showa

On 14 May, a video appeared on social media of a farmer being shot by ENDF soldiers on the roadside in West Showa. Filmed initially from within a military vehicle, a soldier asks his officer (in the vehicle) what he is to do with a farmer sitting at his feet at the roadside. He then shoots the farmer three times at close range but the farmer stirs and begins to sit up before being shot again. The executioner then turns the farmer's body over with his foot, shouts a cry of victory and poses over the corpse. The distressing video is available on the OSG website.⁵⁸



On Saturday 27 May, **five men** were taken from prison in Darba town, Sululta, North Showa, and **executed in the bush** some distance away by government security forces, according to an *OMN* report on 9 June.⁵⁹ The five included a father and son and at least one elderly man, although they were detained as suspected OLA members.

Recent killings in West Showa

ENDF troops based in Dikii village, Ambo district, West Showa, entered Galan Wadeessa village on 5 September and **shot dead Galaasa Jifaara** 'in front of the people' because he was accused of having 'ties with OLA'.

They arrested several, women as well as men. The village of Karra was also terrorised (W.1).

On 4 September, ENDF entered Arita Tokee village, Mida Qanyi district, West Showa. They **killed 70 year-old Nagasu Oljira** 'in front of his home' and stole his 50 cattle. They also looted livestock from Haro Marami village, Liban Jaawi district, 'on several occasions' and 'severely beat the people.'

Eight year-old Gaddis Waquma fled into the bush, away from the shooting, and has not been found since (W.1).

On 9 September, **ENDF soldiers tied a farmer to a stake and burnt him to death** in Mida Qanyi district. W.1 sent the disturbing image shown right.



⁵⁸ <https://oromiasupport.org/video/on-14-may-a-video-appeared-on-social-media-of-a-farmer-being-shot-by-endf-soldiers-on-the-roadside-in-west-showa/>

⁵⁹ https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0SRwTmb18fU61bjxyAwmJmYpBdnhPH6aSwxpgiAcdKrVJgW2dcDohHPb1k9aTUDp4l&id=100064662703541&mibextid=ZbWKwL

Living conditions: ENDF forcing Oromo from North and West Showa

M (see p.15) also reported corruption in local government. Fertilizer is sold to farmers by government officials and local militia. A 100 kg bag should be sold for 5000 Birr (\$90) but corrupt administrators and security forces charge 10,000 Birr. This corruption applies across Oromia. Only a few farmers have access to fertilizer anyway, the informant said.

Worsening attacks by government forces on Oromo citizens and businesses in North Showa have caused many businesspeople to move from smaller towns and villages to cities, according to a report by *OMN* on 12 June.⁶⁰

In particular, government security forces were accused of ‘torturing’ residents of Kuyu, Ejere, Darra, Debralibanos, Wacalee, Dagam, Yaya Gulale and elsewhere. In many parts of Salale district, ordinary daily life is impossible. Goods and medicines have become extremely expensive or completely unavailable. Government fertilizer is impossible to get.

Farmers are unable to tend their land, boding ill for next year. Because of local fighting between OLA and government forces, ‘ordinary citizens pay the price’ with their goods looted and residents killed or imprisoned.

Arsi zone: Killings

OLLAA listed the following extrajudicial killings:

Gaanaa Hamaa, Mexi, Huluqo Horata, E Arsi, 27 April

Ahmed Jabbil, Burqa 2, Dugda Zeway, E Arsi, 21 May

Amboo Awaas and **Hajii Tukee**, Wataro Dino, Marti, E Arsi, 23 May

Hiisaa Gabirsoo,

Abbuu Abdii and **Fayisoo Haphii**. Heban town, W Arsi, 23 May

Amaan Gammadaa, Algrima, Shalla, W Arsi, 7 July.

Wollo (Oromia Special Zone, Amhara Region): Killings

Names of some of those killed this year in Wollo were listed among extrajudicial killings reported each month by OLLAA:

Adem Mohamad, Bora, Dawa Arawa, 15 March

Amme Aliyi, Bate, Jille Dhumuga district, 11 April

Sayid Ibrahim, ‘Damato, Bate’, 16 July

The **killing of injured Oromo patients** who were taken from Jille Dhumuga district of Oromia Special Zone in Amhara Region to **Yifat Hospital in Showa Robit in April 2021** was reported by OSG (Report 56,⁶¹ p.7). A video of the killings began circulating on social media on 5 April 2021. Research carried out shortly after the incident by the Digital Forensic Research Laboratory has since come to the notice of OSG. The investigation, published by DFRLab in May 2021,⁶² confirms the locality of the killings as the compound of Yifat Hospital and that at least eight were killed (ten were named by OSG).

⁶⁰https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0ZVojjuScMSdEzAtCR7LTaHe3BDTzA4s48QCb1rp2k46kLACmP6gwWhcMU9An4XQrl&id=100064662703541&mibextid=ZbWKwL

⁶¹ <https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-56-June-2021.pdf>

⁶² <https://medium.com/dfrlab/violent-attack-in-ethiopia-targets-healthcare-access-285d27706ce4>

The video also demonstrates that the killings were perpetrated not only by Fano members but also by Ethiopian Federal Police and Amhara Region government forces, identified by their uniforms.

South Wollo, Amhara Region: Detention and beating

An elderly couple, Mulatu Ejjeta and his wife Bashatu (right) were taken into custody and severely beaten in Kombolcha town, South Wollo, on 21 August. They received serious injuries. They were beaten because their son had ‘run into the forest’, i.e. joined OLA (W.1).



OLF political prisoners



Addis Standard reported the disappearance in custody of detained OLF leaders on 11 May.⁶³ They had been taken from Burayu Police Station on the evening of 18 April. One of the seven, OLF central committee member Kenassa Ayana (left, now; below left, pre-arrest) ‘cannot walk due to ailments sustained after he was detained.’

Human Rights Watch reported on July 24 the continued illegal detention, in deplorable conditions, of the senior OLF officials for the last three years.⁶⁴

‘Ethiopian authorities should immediately release seven Oromo opposition figures arbitrarily detained for around three years purely for their political role’ Human Rights Watch said.



‘Oromia police have held seven senior members of the opposition political party, the [OLF] . . . Since 2020, authorities have detained Abdi Regassa, Dawit Abdeta, Lammi Begna, Michael Boran, Kenessa Ayana, and Gaada Oljira, and, since 2021, Gaada Gebissa – despite multiple judicial orders directing their release. . . .’

Deputy Africa Director, Laetitia Bader, said police authorities were ‘making a mockery’ of Ethiopia’s judicial system ‘through the prolonged and cruel detention without charge of the Oromo opposition politicians . . . The Ethiopian government should immediately release them and ensure that wrongful detention is no longer used as a tool of political repression.’

Human Rights Watch continued ‘Oromia police authorities have repeatedly violated the detainees’ due process rights, forcibly disappearing them or holding them incommunicado, denying them access to their lawyers and family members for weeks or months – at times up to eight months – and frequently moving them between makeshift and official detention sites, further hampering their families’ access.

⁶³ <https://addisstandard.com/news-olf-warns-transgression-of-international-conventions-after-senior-officials-go-missing-from-police-custody/>

⁶⁴ [https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/24/ethiopia-oromo-opposition-figures-held-despite-court-orders#:~:text=\(Nairobi\)%20%E2%80%93%20Ethiopian%20authorities%20should,Human%20Rights%20Watch%20said%20today.](https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/24/ethiopia-oromo-opposition-figures-held-despite-court-orders#:~:text=(Nairobi)%20%E2%80%93%20Ethiopian%20authorities%20should,Human%20Rights%20Watch%20said%20today.)

Government security forces arrested Abdi Regassa, a member of the party's executive committee, in late February 2020, on suspicion of killing a police officer in Burayu on the outskirts of Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. Police held him at a government office in the Sidist Kilo neighborhood in Addis Ababa before his eventual transfer to a Burayu police station.

His whereabouts remained unknown to lawyers and family members for over two months. Oromia police have since transferred him to at least eight different detention sites in Oromia, including the Oromia regional police special forces camp in the town of Gelan, where he was kept incommunicado for eight months.

Police arrested Lammi Begna, Dawit Abdeta, Kenessa Ayana, and Michael Boran in July 2020, along with dozens of other opposition figures and journalists soon after the assassination of an Oromo singer and activist, Hachalu Hundessa. Oromia police frequently shifted the detainees' locations, including holding them at a former poultry farm outside Awash Melkassa, used by Oromia Special Forces, without notifying their family members or lawyers. One relative said that the police had transferred his brother to about 14 detention sites since his arrest.

"We didn't know where they were, how they were doing," a family member of one of the detainees said. . .

In April 2023, Oromia police authorities moved the seven detainees from a Burayu police station and then withheld their whereabouts. It was only after two weeks that family members discovered where they were held. People interviewed said they believed that the detainees' disappearance occurred the day before Ethiopia's national electoral board was expected to visit them.

The detainees reappeared a week later in the town of Dukem, 37 kilometers southeast of Addis. "The police didn't mention or give any explanation for why they were transferred from Burayu to Dukem," said a defense team lawyer. "All seven were imprisoned in a nine-square-meter room with bad sanitary conditions." . . .

Regional and federal courts have called for the release of all the detainees, yet authorities have appealed and flouted judicial orders. Regional state prosecutors closed case files against Michael Boran, Kenessa Ayana, and Gaada Gebissa due to lack of evidence between November 2021 and January 2022, yet all remain detained without charge. Gaada Oljira has never been formally charged.

The authorities dropped the initial murder charges against Abdi Regassa, only to accuse him of one count of telecommunication fraud and two counts under the country's anti-terrorism law. The Oromia Supreme Court acquitted him of those charges and ordered he be released on June 24, 2021. On March 29, 2021, the Oromia Supreme Court upheld its dismissal of charges against Lammi Begna and Dawit Abdeta for the second time, only for Oromia police to rearrest them as they left the court. Rather than abide by the ruling, the Oromia public prosecutor appealed all three release decisions to the Federal Supreme Court, which upheld the release orders of the lower courts.

Oromia police continued to detain the opposition figures, despite a district court ruling in favor of a habeas court petition filed by defense lawyers for four of the detainees in July 2022, ordering them freed. . . .

'Family members and defense lawyers have been particularly concerned about the detainees' deteriorating health and well-being. While the authorities have allowed detainees to receive treatment, care has been delayed, interrupted, and inadequate, or otherwise denied, former

detainees and relatives have said. Kenessa Ayana's health rapidly deteriorated in detention, and he now suffers from chronic diabetics and liver complications and needs crutches or a wheelchair to move. Gaada Gebissa suffers from a Hepatitis B infection. . . .'

Eastern Oromia: killings and starvation

OLLA listed the following in its monthly reports of verified extrajudicial killings:

Yaasin Amadoo, Walensu, Xulla district, West Hararge, 20 May

Gadisa Abiram, Babo Gorio, Jaarso, West Hararge, 21 May

Ibrahim Abdi and **Abdalla**, Didu, Doba district, West Hararge, unspecified day in May.

An informant based in Egypt sent information about conditions around Gara Mulata, East Hararge, on 20 April. He wrote, when sending the photographs right: ' . . . famine has been raging in the valley districts of Hararghe such as Gola Oda, Kumbi Goha, Mayyu Mullukke, Midaga Lola, Malka Balo and Burka Dintu for the past two years.

Many properties have been destroyed by the famine. These are horticultural/pastoral districts. When the rain stops, livestock will obviously disappear. Accordingly, the cattle that lost their pasture were left with a famine. There was no rainwater and they were exposed to thirst and they had to share distant sources.

Camels, cattle, goats and other animals were also massacred as a result of famine. Their milk rotted its source and exposed the people to starvation. Our people are now overwhelmed by hunger. . . [Only eye-witnesses can understand their suffering]. Surprisingly, it does not seem to many people that there is a human being left behind in Gara Mulata.'



Western Oromia

West Wallega Killings

Seven killings were reported by the West Wallega Human Rights Defenders group in their fifth report, from May, which was uploaded to the OSG website and circulated in July.⁶⁵

These killings have not been recorded previously by OSG:

Hisqel Driba, 20, former militia member, Jarso Lalo, Guliso district, 18 August 2022

Merga Bedasa, 45, merchant, Chalia 01, Guliso, 6 September 2022

Driba Chala, 35, merchant, Chalia 01, Guliso, 11 November 2022

Mulugeta Abdisa, 45, civilian, G. Gute, Guliso, 6 March 2023

Keresa Yonas, 20, and

Eba Tesfa, 18, from Wera Dalle, Guliso, both killed 8 April 2023

Karasa Sanbeta, 35, merchant, Gida Bikir, Boji Chokorsa district, '3 July' 2023

(The date is incorrect. The report was written in May.)

⁶⁵ https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/West-Wollega-Report-Part-5_May-2023-2.pdf

OLLAA monthly reports on extrajudicial killings included the following in West Wallega, March to May 2023:

Adugna, Belle, Begi district, 8 March

Tayiba and **Asha**, Qama Cidhi, Begi, 8 March

Malkaa Sambatoo, Buqo Asabi, Lalo Asebi, 1 April

Tasgaraa Nagaraa, Gaba Dafino, Jaarso, 20 May

Qajeelaa Nagaasaa and **Hordofaa Nagaasaa**, Mura Lakku, Jaarso, 21 May.

A local informant (W.1) reported to OSG on 22 August. He said there were ‘numerous’ unreported incidents of human rights abuses in West Wallega. ‘We don’t know even 10% of what is happening. Youngsters are all joining OLA. OLA controls large areas now.’

Students returning to Mandi town for end-of-term breaks are killed when walking around or disappear and their bodies are never found. Many women are raped by soldiers. The government pays for people to inform on each other. In 34 kebeles in Mandi woreda, he estimated **150-180 have been killed and thousands imprisoned since January 2023**. Most of these have been Qeerroo – young men – but men and women of all ages are included. Rates of killing and detention are particularly high in West Wallega zone because OLA operates there.

W.1 told OSG that in late March/early April, **Merga Badhasa**, a wealthy businessman in his mid-fifties, **was shot dead by ENDF** on the threshold of his home in Chalia Eka, Guliso district, West Wallega. He owned shops, a restaurant and a tea-house.

ENDF troops returned to **dismember his body** outside his home. He was accused of supporting OLA. ‘The ENDF are not capable of fighting OLA, so they take revenge on innocent civilians.’

Also in late March or early April, the 18 year-old **son of high school teacher Tesfaye Boru**, **was killed** while sitting under a coffee tree at his home in Warra Dale village, Guliso district, W Wallega.

W.1 investigated reports of **live burials** in Qiltu Kara and determined that there were two separate incidents, which occurred about three weeks apart.



Around the first week of May, **two teachers and three students** were apprehended while walking along a road near Mandi, West Wallega. Mandi is about 20 km northwest of Qiltu Kara.

They were taken to a military camp near Mandi and interrogated before being forced to dig a large pit and **made to lie in it for nine or ten days before being shot dead**. These, W.1 was certain, were the five pictured alive lying in a pit, which was circulated on social media (left).

A second incident occurred about three weeks later, sometime between the last week of May and mid-June.

Six individuals, including those shown in life below right,

were taken to a smaller subsidiary military camp at Benguwa, a few km away. They **were buried alive**.

The ENDF refused to release the bodies to relatives, who were themselves threatened with torture or death if persisting with their demands. Four of those who were buried alive were named by another informant, W.2, on 25 July:

Obsii Dinagdee
Ayyaanaa Asaffaa
Marara Daanyee
Iyyasuu Kaasahuun

Another man, Tesfaye Terfassa, a rich 38 yr old, had all his goods taken and was taken to hospital before being returned back to Qiltu Kara police station.

OMN reported on 4 June ⁶⁶ (3m. 40s. to 4m. 20s. in the 9 m. Afaan Oromo broadcast) the **killing** in the previous few days by government security forces of **four people** in Sayo Nole district and **two** in Nejo, West Wallega. The four in Sayo Nole were **publicly executed** while standing at the edge of the grave that had been prepared for them.

12 burnt to death in Homa

Twelve youngsters, ten young men and two young women, were **burnt alive** in huts in Homa town, the administrative centre for Homa district, West Wallega, on Sunday 18 June, by ENDF. The incident was reported in Afaan Oromoo and Amharic by OMN on 21 June.^{67,68} The victims were accused of supporting OLA.

More killings in West Wallega and Qellem Wallega

The following were among the extrajudicial killings in West Wallega in June and July reported by OLLAA. The list also includes **five killed in Qellem Wallega* and one in Illubabor:****

Habti Ebbisa and **Abiraama Mangashaa**, Homa town, Homa district, 14 June
Abdulaziz Isma'el, Yati, Anfilo, Qellem Wallega,*19 June
Ramadan Shaafi, Mana Sibu town, Mana Sibu district, 21 June
Amanu Mitiku, Oda Abuno, Sayo Nole, 22 June
Efrem Figaaduu, Dembi Dollo town, Qellem Wallega,* 6 July
Dabala Miresa,
Kenasa Hambisa and
Ifa Idosa, Cirracha, Sadan Canqa, Qellem Wallega,* 11 July
Waqqaarii Caalii, Mandi town, West Wallega, 16 July
Siraji Musa, Qondala town, West Wallega, 23 July



⁶⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RnwuY1I-Bg>

⁶⁷ From 2m. 45s. to 6m. 10s. in 25 minute broadcast <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TF7YpA7-tU>

⁶⁸ https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid024y4PEgUWLoC4ebzYfASS6dSy8oY4nq59LuVissNTrQhd5YwFW98MDBNWZDW7pFqPl&id=100064662703541&sfsn=mo&mibextid=RUBZ1f

Lataa Fayyisaa, Wanki, Mana Sibbu, 23 July
Samu'el Bantii and **Akliluu Dawit**, Aira town, 26 July
Malaku Jirata, Nasisi, Nejo district, 28 July
Yadesa Beekuma, Cawaqa, Buno Bedele, Illubabor,** 31 July.

Informant W.2, reported on 25 July that government security forces **killed two civilians** in Mendi on 24 July and that a few days previously, about 20 July, **four civilians** were rounded up, **shot and their bodies left on the street**. He was unable to name the victims.

Former MP, Milkessa Gemechu, reported on 17 August, the **killing** on that day of Jimma University graduate, **Abdanna Jemal Mardassa** (right) at his home town in Wanjo, Lalo Asabi district, W Wallega. Abdanna was killed by 'Ethiopian army members.'⁶⁹



OSG informant W.1 also reported four recent killings and two disappearances/suspected killings:

On Friday 18 August, **three young men** were taken from their homes **and an elder** was taken from his maize farm in Inango, Lalo Asebi, West Wallega, and **paraded in public** as 'Shane', the government's derogatory name for OLA. On Saturday 19 August, they were **taken to the Wanjo forest and killed**. The body of only one has so far been found. They were all from poor farming families with no interest in politics.

On Sunday 20 August, **two young men** were taken from their homes in Bondo Sochi village, Aira Guliso, West Wallega, and **'beaten almost to death'** before being taken to Aira Guliso. Their present location and **fate is unknown**.

Executions in Dembi Dollo

Four young men, 'qeerroo', were detained and tortured in Dembi Dollo prison, West Wallega, according to reports on September 4th (W.1). They are shown above in an Ethio Forum news clip,⁷⁰ in which they are named:



Waaqtola Dereje
Hunde Banti
Danga Xena and
Diba Lalo.

On 8 September it was reported that **Danga Xena** (also named Temesgen Danga, right) was **executed** and his body thrown into the bush at Minko village.

The **execution of the other three was confirmed on 10 September**, after their disappearance from custody when Danga's killing was reported (W.1).



⁶⁹<https://www.facebook.com/100051305350139/posts/pfbid02PWGJaapG76FCMr6ddvUWM9KZ5WQKYfHmb2gyL4hy8UAV6Z6Kfm6M1KZ2eoHCjybYI/?mibextid=CDWPTG>

⁷⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJzCgXgx4MU>

Torture and injuries in East and West Wallega

A former detainee contacted OSG on 22 August. He had been detained as a qeerroo demonstrator from 2016 to 2019 and on several occasions since. He reported on a form of torture which is a variant of other ‘cold water’ techniques of torture practised by this and the previous Ethiopian government (see OSG Report 49, p.27).

During one month of detention in 2022 in Nekemte, East Wallega, he was among 37 held in an unofficial detention centre, Koketi school, in Koketi park. He was made to help dig six large holes which were lined with watertight material and filled with cold water, in which detainees were immersed up to their chest and necks for up to one whole week at a time. He was held for five days and nights in cold water up to his neck.

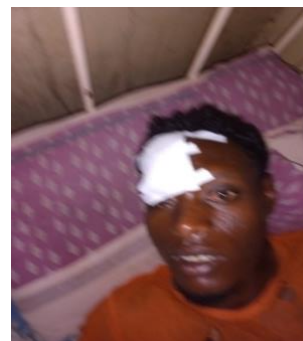
The West Wallega group reported that the following received significant injuries from the security forces named in the table below:

1	Dinka Elias	17	M	Aira	Keta Abakorma	Single	2/12/2022	Bullet injury
2	Ibsa Indalu	18	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single	31/12/2022	By NDFs on the street
3	Abdi Temesgen	20	M	Guliso	Tegie	Single	31/12/2022	By NDFs on the street
4	Jalal Kenasa	18	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single	31/12/2022	By NDFs on the street
5	Temesgen Benti	18	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single	9/01/2022	Police
6	Dula Umata	30	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married	9/01/2022	Police
7	Fikire Tafase	50	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married	9/01/2022	Police
8	Ifa Ayana	25	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single	9/01/2022	Police
9	Benti Lamesa	22	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single	24/03/2023	By Oromia Special Forces
10	Dinka Yohanis	25	M	Guliso	Wayu manie	Single	01/04/2023	By NDF
11	Bona Chali	26	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single	08/04/2023	By militia
12	Bacha Itana	23	M	Guliso	Wara Dalle	Single	08/04/2023	By militia



The young man shown left was shot in the neck and left for dead in the forest. He has no choice now but to join OLA fighters in the bush. ‘Otherwise, Command Post officials would simply kill him. Such victims are not even allowed access to medical care.’

The man shown right ‘was tortured and has sustained trauma to his right eye socket and left lower leg by means of government forces using sticks.’



Detention in West Wallega

The West Wallega Human Rights Defenders group wrote ‘but in Oromia citizens are still arbitrarily arrested from wherever they are or wherever they go. For example, civilians are arrested without explanation or apparent cause while going to the church, while going to the market, to the farm fields, etc. This is not to [say] that citizens should never be arrested, but if they are the authorities should take them before a court of law. This is not happening. The Command Post authorities keep arrested civilians as long as they desire. Sometimes they take the citizens out of jail and kill them extrajudicially without any process at all. The Ethiopian Constitution, article 19, grants citizens to be brought before a court when arrested, but Oromia police stations and military camps connected with the Command Posts keep citizens

without asking any questions as long as they want. So where is the supremacy of law? There is none.’

The following arrests took place between July 2022 and April 2023.

No	Name	Age	Sex	Woreda/District	Kebele/Village	Marital status	Date (July 22-April 23)	Remarks
1	Ephrem Tufa	35	M	Guliso	Jarso Badeso	Married	02/07/2022	Health worker
2	Melkamu Zaude	45	M	Guliso	Wayu manie	Married	11/07/2022	Farmer
3	Gemeda Obsi	25	M	Guliso	Sanki Dano	Married	16/07/2022	Farmer
4	Degaga Adisu	28	M	Guliso	Sanki Dano	Married	16/07/2022	Farmer
5	Gemeda Taye	26	M	Guliso	Sanki Dano	Married	16/07/2022	Teacher
6	Kajela Wagari	24	M	Guliso	Sanki Dano	Married	16/07/2022	>>
7	Lalisa Indalu	25	M	Guliso	Sanki Dano	Married	16/07/2022	>>
8	Idosa Bakala	20	M	Guliso	Sanki Dano	Single		
9	Abdi	18	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single		
10	Wondimu Hailu	30	M	Guliso	Sanki Dano	Married		
11	Chara Bijiga	25	M	Guliso	Galawo gute	Single		Health worker
12	Baru Terfasa	30	M	Boji Chokorsa	Didibe	Married	22/07/2022	
13	Faisa Yigezu	35	M	Boji Chokorsa	Amuma kajela	Married	>> >>	
14	Bacha Yadesa	28	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married		Teacher
15	Korsa Milkias	18	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Single		While riding a motorcycle
16	Amenti Kasaye	20	M	Guliso	Tegie	Single	21/12/2022	>>
17	Hirkisa Kebena	18	M	Guliso	Tegie	Single	21/12/2022	>>
18	Degaga Kenasa	19	M	Guliso	Wayu manie	Married	21/12/2022	>>
19	Karasa Sanbeta	35	M	Boji Choko	Gida Bikir	Married	07/02/2023	Merchant
20	Samuel Baisa	30	M	>>	>>	>>	>>	
21	Dabala Birasa	36	M	>>	>>	>>	>>	Health professional
22	Gemechis Hanbisa	30	M	>>	>>	>>	>>	>>
23	Naguma Bulcha	18	M	>>	>>	Single	>>	
24	Aguma Bulcha	20	M	>>	>>	Single	>>	
25	Adugna	22	M	Guliso	Wara Dalle	>>	>>	
26	Sanbeta Yonas	18	M	Guliso	Wara Dalle	>>	>>	
27	Asmera Beyena	30	M	Guliso	Wara Dalle	>>	>>	
28	Joro Teshoma	23	M	Guliso	Wara Dalle	>>	>>	
29	Gemechis Negasa	25	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married	22/03/2023	
30	Ephrem Lamesa	38	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married	09/04/2023	Merchant
31	Wagari Barude	40	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married	09/04/2023	Merchant
32	Ayana	35	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married	09/04/2023	Merchant
33	Ifa Jaleta	30	M	Guliso	Chalia 01	Married	09/04/2023	Merchant
34	Bona Muluna	22	M	Guliso	Wayu manie	Single	25/04/2023	Qerroo member

Life under Command Post rule

Local informants W.1 and W.2 corroborate the West Wallega report. Life under military command post rule is difficult, dangerous and destitute. West Wallega is nearly 500 km from Finfinnee and very hard to reach. Checkpoints are everywhere. The human rights defenders wrote:

‘The rural communities do not have access to public transport, hence they rent motor bikes to transport patients to the health facilities. However, nowadays the government forces do not allow the motor bikes to transport injured or sick people. This creates great difficulties for the rural communities to get health care. Health service is a recognized and named human right according to international law. Health as a human right is part of the Geneva Conventions. Ethiopia is a signatory to the Geneva Conventions, yet does not honor their provisions.

Ethiopian National Defense Forces don't like forests and Bushes they don't want to encounter green lands; they burn them. For example, on April 7, 2023 the **ENDF burned coffee in Dilla Gogola** of Guliso District.

Sexual assaults are also attempted and **sometimes rape is committed. Women cannot go alone to areas such as the grinding mill, markets or church.** The Ethiopian National Defense Forces arbitrarily arrest citizens, merchants in particular, and, without fail, ask them for money. We know many persons who have been forced to pay more than 10,000 ETB to be released from detention in Aira and Guliso Districts.'

Travel and commerce are severely impaired. Access to markets is very limited. Tele-communications are intermittent. In some areas in Western Oromia, civilians fear the return of internet and phone access because this may presage a drone attack. (Drones may need intact internet and phone systems for accurate GPS targeting.) Public and private vehicles are restricted. Ambulances are commandeered by security forces. Cars and motorbikes are not allowed out of towns into the countryside. Health clinics and hospitals are closed and out of supplies. The West Wallega group wrote, regarding the denial of health services:

'An unexpected horrible event occurred in Aira District, Homi Suchi kebele, in early May 2023. The government officials in charge at the Command Post, with the National Defense Forces supporting them, **refused to allow the community to receive health services**, even if the community members had paid for health insurance. The reason was that they criticized the civilians, **claiming that they were supporting OLA.**

Another challenge is the problem of withdrawal of bank services from the area in addition to extreme increases in inflation. In Ethiopia in order to run any kind of project, or take on entrepreneurial tasks or venture, finance is very important. However, the citizens of this part of **Oromia are not allowed to withdraw more than 1000 ETB**, (worth about \$9.70) at a time.'

The rights defenders summarised their findings in the following table:

No	Types of services restricted	Partially	Totally	Remarks
1	Internet		x	Available only in district towns
2	Bajaji (taxis)	x		Can't reach the countryside
3	Motor Cycles	x		Only in towns
4	Mobile Networks	x		Intermittent – sometimes they totally close/stop
5	The right to move (arbitrary curfew)	x		In the countryside, citizens are not allowed to move from place to place after 6pm
6	Ambulance Service		x	Only transports government troops
7	Private Cars	x		They can't go to the countryside
8	Bank Services	x		Especially Commercial Bank does not give more than 1000 ETB for individuals

Horo Guduru and East Wallega: exodus to towns follows ethnic cleansing



Amhara settlements in Horo Guduru began in the Derg resettlement campaign in the mid-1980s. The settlements are no longer only on state farms, like the one at Hangar-Gutin, East Wallega. More people have since settled from Gojjam, Amhara Region, inviting friends and relatives to join them. These Amhara settlements are now supplied with firearms by the government and have been encouraged to be prepared to fight OLA by Demeke Mekonnen, the deputy Prime Minister. Land is now being sold to Amhara settlers, according to two of OSG's local informants, W.2 and HG.

The Oromo farmers outside these settlements are forbidden from carrying arms. One local informant said 'They are poor. They don't understand politics.'

Government forces have attacked Fano in Amhara Region but they have not followed them into Horo Guduru and East Wallega zones, to where they dispersed and where they continue to wreak havoc.

Although Fano is rightly blamed for ethnic cleansing, government federal and regional forces are also responsible by withdrawing to allow Fano access to commit this crime.

According to informant HG, on 21 June, there is no unaffected kebele in Jardega Jarte district of Horo Guduru. 52,000 IDPs have fled to Alibo town and another 58,000 are living outdoors, eating wild fruit, unable to return to their farms and homes because of insecurity.

OMN reported on 10 June ⁷¹ that IDPs were still arriving in Jardega Jarte, Sakala town and Shambu town. Civilians have been killed and more were dying because of lack of medical support.

Western Oromia hosts over 700,000 IDPs according to OCHA on 17 August,⁷² and 1.2 million according to EAMRF.⁷³

Some returning farmers have been killed. IDPs in Horo Guduru and East Wallega, refuse to move because of insecurity. Without farming, food insecurity is inevitably prolonged.

There has been no help from government or any NGOs. Aid agencies are not allowed access because of insecurity. Very little, if any, food or other aid is getting through. The Oromo Relief Association tried but got no further than Shambu town, after being driven back. Remote areas like Alibo town are completely without help. Women IDPs in Shambu Bus Station are giving birth outdoors 'in the mud'.

In Kiramu district of East Wallega, only one kebele – Wasti – still has Oromo residents. All others have fled, mostly to Kiramu town or Nekemte, or to Horo Guduru zone. All Oromo people from Horo Guduru zone – about 90-100,00 in all – have gone to the towns of Shambu and Agamsa in Amuru district. All from Jardega Jarte district in Horo Guduru have gone to Shambu city.

⁷¹https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid06wwfKpQAfTKLcGY7rBDpiGaGbsvj6QYzeJywDUzduoU7aL64CyqiBAoBZad56yAvl&id=100064662703541&mibextid=ZbWKwL

⁷²https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia?ct=t%28EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_11_May_2023_COPY_04%29&goal=0_82a80d2ffe-b21fbbd1d1-109596177

⁷³ <https://bnn.network/breaking-news/health/east-african-medical-relief-foundation-eamrf-extends-aid-to-displaced-communities-in-western-oromia-ethiopia/>

The ethnic cleansing of Oromo from Horo Guduru and East Wallega by Fano brigades reached a climax in November/December 2022 but continued into 2023 (OSG Report 62,⁷⁴ pp.24-28).

Another wave of Fano attacks on Horo Guduru began in June (see below).

Further details have also emerged about killings in May and November 2022 since OSG Report 62:

May 2022

A local informant sent more information about killings in Biiftuu Nuuf Bate, Horo Guduru, on 24 May 2022. The locality was Qubsa village in Biiftuu Nuuf Bate, Ababo district. They were said to have been ‘killed in Qubsa school and next to the church.’ In addition to the 14 listed in OSG Report 60,⁷⁵ pp.23-4, at least another 13 were killed:

Buzuu Tamasgeen Olqabaa, 20, student

Qalbiisaa Dhaabaa, 54, farmer

Gazzany Warquu, 45, local government administrator

Dhibbaa Gurmeessaa, 46, local government administrator

Tilahuun Olaanaa, 36, local government administrator

Mootii Oriyaa, 36, local government administrator

Addisuu Abajjee, 39, farmer, militia member

Zalaleem Daffaar Goobanaa, 33,

Habtee Jabeessaa, 40, farmer, militia member

Luluu Garramuu, 42, farmer, militia member

Leellisaa, 41, farmer, militia member

Gishilee, 39, farmer, militia member

Rattaa Buzaayyoo, 28, unmarried, was killed earlier, on 15 February 2022.

November 2022



Killings in Fano attacks in 2022 and early 2023 were described in OSG Report 62, pp.24-28. Attacks were particularly common from September to December 2022, and maximal in November.

Informant HG reported on 4 July that the decomposed human remains shown left were of 19 people collected by government forces in the forest in 2-3 kebeles in KIRAMU district, East Wallega, where they had died during and following the November/December massacres by Fano. They are shown being re-buried in

this photograph, dated 10 June. HG said that over the four months leading up to 4 July, hyenas had attacked humans in East Wallega on five occasions. He believed that local packs had developed a taste for human flesh since the killings at the end of 2022.

Informant W.2 sent the photographs of three family members among those killed by Fano members in several villages in Jardega Jarte district, Horo Guduru in November 2022.

⁷⁴ <https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/OSG-Report-62-24-April-2023.pdf>

⁷⁵ <https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-60-.pdf>

OSG's informant W.2 spoke to the stepson of the farmer whose headless corpse is shown below. Fano had cut off his head. Also shown are his wife and his son, aged 8-10 years. The young boy's throat has been cut.



In November 2022, civilians who had gathered for shelter and prayer in a Protestant Church in a village close to Alibo, Jardega Jarte, were attacked and **a number were killed** by an armed irregular group. (Informant W.2 was not convinced the culprits were Fano, believing they may have been government-hired thugs pretending to be Fano.)

Another group of people were killed by government ENDF forces after Fano left the area in Alibo village, Jarte, in November. The remains shown right were ascribed to this incident by W.2.



Just before going to press, local informant P also relayed reports, received in June, of incidents from eye-witnesses and victims of abuses occurring in November 2022. In the IDP camp in the Bus Station at Shambu (below) were people from Jardega Jarte town and people from around Alibo town in Jardega Jarte district of Horo Guduru.



Three girls, two from one kebele of Jardega Jarte town and one from a village near Alibo were so traumatised by gang-rape that when they found they were pregnant, they ran away from the IDP camp to the forest where they **committed suicide** by hanging themselves.

Two girls aged 11 and 14 lost both parents when they were killed in front of them. They could barely speak 'yes' or 'no' answers when spoken to. They ran off because they could not face talking about their story.

One woman, who was gang-raped when pregnant, was unable to relate to her baby when born. Her husband, the baby's father, was killed in an attack in a village near Kiramu town, Kiramu district, East Wallega. He was **tied to a chair and forced to witness the gang-rape of his wife. She was then forced to witness him being killed, decapitated and dismembered, his body parts remaining in their hut as she fled.** She was barely able to tell her story because she was continuously weeping.

The following were killed in April and May 2023, according to monthly OLLAA reports:

Waqe Tasfaye, Maqa Baandira, Leqa Dulacha, East Wallega, 1 April

Shanqo Axinaafu and Rushaa Dula, Burqitu Hobora, Horo, Horo Guduru, 1 April

Mammad Amin, Gutin, Gida Ayana, East Wallega, 2 April

Yadessa Gaddisaa and Shulo Gobosho, Abay Dale, Gudaya Bilu, East Wallega, 27 April

Guddataa Idosa and Alamayo Kabada, Fayine, Sasiga, East Wallega, 30 April

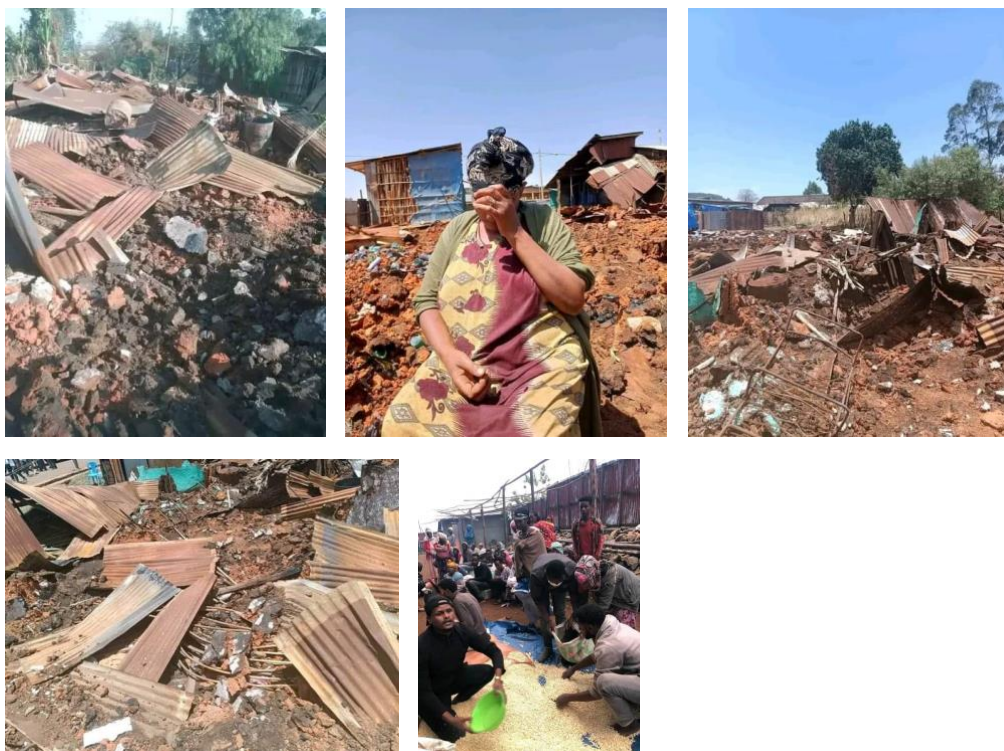
(East Wallega, Sasiga, Fayine)

Ragasa Galata, Hangar, Gida Ayana, East Wallega, May (date unspecified)
Dabaloo Seenxi and **Addunya Ragasa**, Haro Lago, Jardega Jarte, Horo Guduru, also in May.

Attacks by Fano June and July 2023

On Wednesday 7 June, Fano forces attacked and killed Oromo civilians in Agamsa town and surrounding villages in Amuru district, looting, burning homes and destroying property. Government security forces and Federal Police who were in the town took no action (*OMN*, 8 June).⁷⁶ Fano forces entered Amuru district from their training base in Haro, 50 km away in Kiramu district, East Wallega, **killing at least five** and injuring dozens according to *Addis Standard*.⁷⁷ **Three more farmers were killed** in Kiramu district, East Wallega at the beginning of June (*OMN*, 10 June, see above).

The *OMN* report included the following images of properties destroyed in Horo Guduru.



More Oromo farmers fled from the district as the act of ethnic cleansing neared completion. Many took shelter in churches. Residents told *Addis Standard* that such attacks had cleared hundreds of farmers from the area last year. Both *Addis Standard* and *OMN* (12 June)⁷⁸ named **three of those killed** in Makano village, Amuru district:

Gudina Guracho, his wife was also killed

Sorri Jukar, his wife was also killed

Takele Fufa, wife injured (listed below as ‘Haadha obbo Taakkalaa’)

⁷⁶https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid04HX83FCqwzBodpVk989mrJRj1kyWySWEmv5c6xQXBJ7UfNyDzV4kx28C4DsWoiAl&id=100064662703541&mibextid=ZbWKwL

⁷⁷<https://addisstandard.com/news-militants-kill-at-least-five-wound-several-people-in-renewed-attacks-in-western-romia/>

⁷⁸https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid0zQSMUo5NptetWGtc4THrDse8JYAc3t5KYB1uyjfzye8YdHcyS3qfJ93LYVXFcxpVl&id=100064662703541&mibextid=ZbWKwL

Others among **fifteen** named as **killed** in Makano village by OSG's reporter HG on 4 July were:

Lammeessaa Yaadataa
Gaddafaa Baqqala
Misgaanuu Baqqalaa
Abiyoot Guyyaasaa
Maammee Tasfaayee
Sanyii Raffisaa

Dirribaa Moosaa
Magarsaa Olanii Bayyanaa
Xiyyee Tolasaa Moosaa
Hindaalee Nagasaa
Bojaa Dhaabaa Soddaa Abiree

At least ten were hospitalised with injuries:

Nugusaa Baqqalaa
Fufaa Ammasaa
Raffisaa Toleeraa
Mitikkuu Qumee
Xilahuun Fufaa

Lammoo Addunyaa. Dheeressaa
Kiisii Dhaabaa hadha warraa Abiyoot
Haadha obbo Taakkalaa isa waregamee
Hintala Bayyanee Dhugumaa

OLLAA corroborated the above killings at Makano village and also reported the **killing** of **Habtamu Alamuu**, Bone Abuna, Horo Buluq, Horo Guduru on 1 June.

These photographs of three of those killed in Makano were sent from sources in Nekemte:



Residents told *OMN* that Fano had burnt down Oromo farmers' homes and properties in nearby Kिरामु district in East Wallega, in 'Chefe Soruma, Boqa, Maya Jinina, Kokofe, Kore and Dereba'.

More Fano attacks followed.

On 12 June, **five were killed**, including a mother and child, in Sidani kebele, Amuru district, according to informant HG on 21 June.

On 16 June, according to *Addis Standard* 20 June and corroborated by informant HG, **eight civilians were killed**, 13 injured and **15 went missing** when Fano militia attacked the village of Wasti in Kिरामु district, East Wallega. The names of those killed were:

Beyene Bekare
Oljira Tolera
Amanu Hirko
Hailu Eticha,

Asaye Beyene
Tolera Hirpha
Tamasgu Yaya
Bikila Bakalu

They were aged between 20 and 58.

OSG's informant HG reported on 4 July that **27 had been killed**. OLLAA corroborated the names of several.

During the raid, Fano attacked ten Oromo villages and stole over 3000 cattle from the kebeles of Wasti, Jirma Dongorro and Ajana in Kिरामु district.

Jiregna Hirpha, Kिरामु District Communication Officer, told *Addis Standard* that Fano had opened permanent military bases in Kिरामु and was operating in four of its ten kebeles, Bagil, Caffee Gudina, Haro and Marga Jireenya.

‘What this group is doing is similar to what is happening in the Horo Guduru zone’ he said. Fano is armed with heavy weapons ‘Brens’ and ‘Dshk’ and trained in Amhara Region and now in Kिरामु district.

Fano were ‘working to change the demography of the area by displacing Oromo farmers and settling Amhara natives on their lands’ he said.⁷⁹

OLLAA named the following killed in late June and July in Horo Guduru and East Wallega. At Tulu Habib, Guduru, Horo Guduru, 25 June:

Fayisaa Tashoomaa

Gammee Maammoo

Eliyas Tashoomaa

Nagaroo Jabeessaa

Warquu Taayyee

Gammachiis Baqqalee, Diga town, Diga district, East Wallega, 7 July

Ayantuu, Cirri, Sibu Sire, East Wallega, 8 July

Fufaa Haftee, Haro town, Haro Limu, East Wallega, 23 July.

ENDF and Fano cooperate in killings and abductions in East Wallega

W.1 reported on 2 September that ENDF soldiers entered Balo Bareda village, Sasiga district, East Wallega, on Friday 25 August, and took an **elderly couple** from their home and **executed** them on suspicion that they prepared food for OLA fighters.

Next day, Saturday 27th, ENDF **abducted and killed three young men, ‘qeerroo’**, from the same village. They were accused of transporting the food to OLA fighters.

On Thursday 31 August, a detainee who had been held for eight months, named **Nathaniel**, aged about 27 years, was taken from prison in Nekemte, East Wallega, by government security forces (W.1). **His decomposing body (right) was found in a water-filled ditch two days later.**



At about 11.00 am on 1 September, one day before the interview, **Bulcha Dawit**, aged about 22-23, was **killed by ENDF in front of 20-30 people** at the market in Chire village, Siree district, East Wallega. He arrived at the market from his farm and was carrying a knife because he had just finished working (W.1).

In Amuru district, Horo Guduru, another **seven farmers** were reported killed on 1 September (W.1).

Also on 1 September, Fano forces entered Horo Guduru and **abducted five** people from Abee Dongoro town, Abee Dongoro district. They took one young man, one man in his 40s named Gamachu, and three others from a social centre/pool hall and took them away to place and fate unknown.

ENDF had vacated Abee Dongoro town and withdrawn to a military camp outside the town. W.1 is certain that this was not an opportunistic raid by Fano and that ENFD vacated the town in order to give Fano unimpeded access.

⁷⁹ <https://addisstandard.com/news-eight-killed-13-injured-in-fresh-attack-in-kiremu-east-wollega-local-admin-accuses-extremist-group-from-amhara-region/>



W.1 confirmed on repeated questioning that despite ENDF and Fano killing each other in Amhara Region, they communicated and cooperated in attacking and looting Oromo in Oromia Region. They share the cattle and looted goods from Fano raids, he said.

According to W.1 on 9 September, ENDF were responsible for the killing of **Danuu Malkaamuu** (left). He was arrested in Waama village of Sibuu district, East Wallega, the previous day and **'beaten to death in front of the people . . . and his body was eaten by animals.'**

Benishangul-Gumuz Region: Killings, burning



Amhara settlers came to Metekel zone of Benishangul-Gumuz Region during the brutal Derg resettlement programme in response to the 1984/5 famine.

Amhara now constitute 23% of the population of Metekel zone and 22% of the region. Berta and Gumuz people are the largest other groups in the region (25 and 21% respectively) but Berta, together with smaller populations of Ma'o and Como, are concentrated in Asosa zone. Shinasha people, seen as better educated and wealthier by other groups, are 8% in the region and 16% in

Metekel zone. The Shinasha people are believed by others to collaborate and cooperate with Amhara forces operating in the region.

The relative population sizes in Metekel zone according to Wikipedia are Gumuz 37%, Amhara 24%, Shinasha 16%, Awi 11%, Oromo 11%.

OSG informant HG, on 21 June, believed there were at least twice as many Oromo. The language on market days in Metekel zone is Afaan Oromo, he said.

Like informants elsewhere, HG found government ENDF and regional forces culpable for atrocities committed by Fano forces because they allowed them unimpeded access to the region and zone. Federal and regional special forces from Sidama Region and Amhara Region were deployed here by the government but were perpetrators rather than protectors from abuse.

HG reported that many were killed in Metekel in the last 3 years and the majority of Oromo villages have been cleared of Oromo. Six out of about 28 kebeles in Dibate district have been cleared completely of Oromo, including the kebeles of Yamp and Sirran.

At least 24 kebeles in Metekel, especially those bordering Amhara Region, have been cleared of Gumuz villages. The residents who survived have for the last year been living without shelter, medicine and regular food, in the forest.

Gumuz civilians have been burnt alive in their huts. HG has recorded **66 killings of Gumuz** people and of **78 Oromo** in the last three years. He estimates that more than 3000 Gumuz people have been killed in that time and believes this is probably a gross underestimate.



HG described historic and severe abuses which had not previously been reported by OSG:

Two boys escaped when a building containing 56 people was set on fire, killing all the others, in Dangur district, in 2021. The **two boys had been** – like many other victims – **castrated**.

At least eight Gumuz people, including several children, were killed in Delbanja kebele, Dangur district, Metekel, in early 2021. Their bodies are shown left.

At the beginning of 2021, Doben kebele in Dibate district was cleared by Amhara forces and Federal police. A 55 year-old woman, named **Beke, had been bed-ridden for two years** and stayed at home. Her husband came from the forest to feed her but was seen and pursued. He escaped, killing one of his attackers. On 7 February 2021, **security forces entered her hut, cut her throat and removed both of her**

hands, which they hung on a tree for one week in Berber city (next to Dibate district in Metekel zone).

Two young men from Chalcho village in Dibate district were **executed** by security forces in January 2022. They had been detained in Galesa town police station for two days before being taken to Gipo forest and shot in the back of the head. A video of the men being walked into the forest with their hands tied behind their backs and then being killed was put on social media and claimed to be the killing of Amhara monks in a northern Ethiopian monastery in May 2023. The clip is on the OSG website.⁸⁰ *Agence France-Presse* fact-checked the video and confirmed it had been taken in Metekel zone of Benishangul-Gumuz region.⁸¹

More recent atrocities were reported by HG:

On 29 April 2023, **Adunya Galata**, Dibate district, Korke kebele, from a village called Amuru, was **executed in public** at Galesa town market, to where he had travelled for market. On 18 May 2023, **Abebe Beyene Seifi**, from the same village, was taken from his home and killed in the forest at a place called Laku in Chalia kebele. **Another man** from Amuru village was executed the same day at home in front of his family.

OLLAA reported the following killings:

Gamachis Saboqa, Bambis town, Bambis district, on 2 April.

Waqtole Hayilu, Qorqa, Dibate district, Metekel (Matakai, Dibaxe, Qorqa

Screenshots of Amhara forces burning Gumuz villages in Metekel during 2022:



⁸⁰ <https://oromiasupport.org/video/two-young-men-from-chalcho-village-in-dibate-district-metekel-zone-benishangul-gumuz-region-were-executed-by-endf-in-january-2022/>

⁸¹ https://factcheck.afp.com/doc.afp.com.33JC4CA?fbclid=IwAR0QA_tu-I_qhWLog5XjLFwU85TPJp4lr_uoX6Qmjq0o-FLiqZ7tGMNfXPK

Gambella Region: Security forces and mob beat and stone Oromo to death

Between 14 and 16 June 2022, at least 50, probably hundreds, of Oromo residents of Gambella city were killed after OLA and Gambella Liberation Movement fighters attacked a weapons depot in the city the previous day.

OSG Reports 60, p.6, and 62, pp.29-30, describe how the initial death toll of 17 increased to over 50, as more information was found about Oromo being rounded up in house-to-house searches, selected because they spoke Afaan Oromo, being summarily executed on the street or beaten to death by Gambella Region security forces and members of the public. Fifteen or more were shot dead by a police officer when taking shelter in a police station in the city. Witnesses saw at least four trucks piled with bodies being taken for burial and estimate that several hundred were killed.

A tweeted video, dated 16 March, shows government security forces, aided by some residents of Gambella city, beating to death at least 12 civilians in a public open space. The distressing 2 min. 20 sec. clip shows victims being enthusiastically kicked, jumped upon and struck with sticks and large rocks until dead.⁸²

Southern Oromia: Killings

Guji

OLLAA reported the following **killings** in Guji zones:

Wayesa Wadera and **'Nikawata'**, Bore town, East Guji, 1 March

Tuku Gamada, Murtu Cillisa, Bula Hora district, West. Guji, 28 April

Jamila Gamada and **Isinino Mako**, Adoye Horo, Wadra, East Guji, 17 May

Tuna Ooba and **Adane Banaaaa**, Kalaltu Sawa, Bula Hora, West Guji, 20 May

Galgaloo Tukuleesa and **Buda Magada**, Buda Magada, Bula Hora, West Guji, 12 June

Suggeessaa Bokkoo and **Quuxalaa Boruu**, Dawa town, Malka Soda, West Guji, 18 June

Sanyii Neqonxenna, Sawana, Oddo Shakiso, Guji, 21 July

Fidee Fida, Gelo, Abaya, West Guji, 23 July

Borana

OLLAA reported the killing of **'Guyo'** in Arero town, Borana, on 19 March.

Refugees

Nowhere welcome; UNHCR 'No Returns' policy for Ethiopia; No safe routes; Stark choices

A society's treatment of refugees is a barometer of its economic, political and mental health. With the rise of populist right-wing politics since the 1960s, there has been a growing and increasingly brutal disregard to the welfare of migrants. Refugees are barely tolerated anywhere and unwelcome everywhere.

⁸² <https://oromiasupport.org/video/this-video-shows-gambella-region-security-forces-and-other-residents-of-the-city-killing-at-least-12-civilians-in-a-public-open-space-the-victims-are-enthusiastically-kicked-jumped-upon-and-struck-w/>

The degree of hostility is along a clear spectrum – from denial of access to a host country and biased decision-making (USA, UK, EU); to physical and sexual violence against refugees (Egypt, Yemen), often with the risk of refoulement and forced eviction (Djibouti, Somaliland); confinement in lethal conditions (Libya), and dumping at the country's border (Tunisia); – up to deliberately murdering refugees, as in the close range shooting and shelling of individuals and groups of migrants attempting to enter Saudi Arabia (pp.40-42).

Against this background, last year's call by UNHCR for a 'no returns policy' to Ethiopia is welcome.⁸³ The UN refugee body stated:

In the current circumstances, with ongoing conflict and violence in parts of the country, large-scale internal displacement, and severe humanitarian needs, UNHCR does not consider it appropriate for States to deny persons from Ethiopia international protection on the basis of an internal flight or relocation alternative.



Refugees rarely choose their destination; it is usually forced upon them and they take 'the first gate open'.

Sudan is no longer an option due to civil war. South Sudan, Kenya and Somalia can only be reached by crossing dangerous parts of Ethiopia.

Many Oromo refugees go east in the direction of Djibouti, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, or they travel, until recently, northwest to Egypt, via Sudan.

Sudan, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia

Since the outbreak of civil war in Sudan, the people-smugglers who used to beat, rob, torture and rape refugees crossing Sudan to Egypt (see OSG Report 61), now profit from capturing refugees in Sudan and taking them to Libya (see below). Some operate from Metema on the border with North Gondar, Amhara Region, extorting money from refugees travelling in the opposite direction from Sudan to Finfinnee/Addis Ababa.⁸⁴



Although access to Egypt (and therefore Libya and Tunisia) is now unlikely, refugees who are stuck in Egypt are in dire straits, exposed now to an upsurge in xenophobic violence and a killing (see below). Even if they reach the coast, those attempting to cross to Italy from Tunisia and Libya risk drowning or being returned to life-threatening conditions of

detention in Libya (see fig.). IOM estimates 22,314 deaths in the Mediterranean since 2014.

Nearly 3,800 drowned last year, almost as many as the peak of 4,255 in 2017,⁸⁵ when EU money was paid to Libya to prevent attempted crossings. Since then, the EU border

⁸³ <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/623079204.pdf>

⁸⁴ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-457-26-June-2023-1.pdf>

⁸⁵ <https://www.iom.int/news/deaths-migration-routes-mena-highest-2017-iom-2022-data-reveals#:~:text=Of%20the%20867%20deaths%20recorded,governorate%20at%20the%20northern%20border>

organisation Frontex has bankrolled air surveillance, including drones, and vessels for Libyan Coast Guards to intercept and return migrants, even from international waters.⁸⁶

Over 1800 have drowned in the central Mediterranean so far in 2023.⁸⁷ ‘Nearly 7,000 people have been intercepted by the Libyan Coast Guard and returned to a cycle of detention and abuse in the country so far this year.’⁸⁸ Probably many more died in the desert of Libya than died at sea, according to previous *IOM* reports.

There is a trafficking industry for refugees caught in Sudan being sold to traffickers and slave-owners in Libya. This is similar to the people-smuggling to Egypt, reported in OSG Report 61. Many Tigrayans have been caught, warehoused in atrocious conditions in the Libyan desert and subjected to torture, rape and repeated ransom demands of thousands of dollars before getting free.⁸⁹ *New Humanitarian* reported on 9 June that 4-6,000 migrants from Egypt were rounded up in eastern Libya and either deported to Egypt or held in a hangar near the border.

Racist attacks in Tunisia on Black Africans increased after President Saïed claimed on 21 February that they were turning Tunisia into a ‘purely African country’. Migrants were then fired from their jobs, removed from their homes and beaten. More have left for Italy this year from Tunisia’s coast than from Libya, for the first time.⁹⁰

Hundreds, including at least 29 children, three pregnant women and six UNHCR-registered asylum-seekers were taken to the desert on the border with Libya and dumped in a remote militarised zone after the killing of a Tunisian man on 3 July precipitated increased xenophobic violence. About 1200 were rounded up between 2 and 5 July by various government security forces and taken to borders with Algeria and Libya. Migrants described being beaten, sexually assaulted and having their food and phones destroyed. Algerian border guards pushed them back and ‘tortured then with electric shocks.’⁹¹ Over 41 died in the sea off Tunisia and 27 died in the desert on the Libyan border in the first week of August.⁹² Like Libya, Tunisia is paid by the EU to keep migrants from crossing the Mediterranean. On 16 July the EU announced a one billion Euro package for Tunisia, including 105 million for ‘border control’.⁹³

Egypt: xenophobic attacks in Cairo, Oromo refugee killed

The Oromo Elders Union, representing Oromo refugees in Cairo, wrote to UNHCR and other refugee organisations on 11 July following xenophobic attacks against refugees by members of the host community in Egypt. Economic hardship and high unemployment have affected

⁸⁶ <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2023/06/09/UN-sex-abuse-scandal-CAR-Ethiopia-food-aid-suspension-Canada-wildfires-Cheat-Sheet>

⁸⁷ https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2023/08/11/amazon-preservation-pledges-assassination-ecuador-and-deadly-hawaii-cheat-sheet?utm_source=The+New+Humanitarian&utm_campaign=1d96582dac-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_ENGLISH_AFRICA&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d842d98289-1d96582dac-29271461

⁸⁸ <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news/2023/06/09/UN-sex-abuse-scandal-CAR-Ethiopia-food-aid-suspension-Canada-wildfires-Cheat-Sheet>

⁸⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/may/15/i-saw-many-bodies-having-escaped-one-conflict-tigray-refugees-face-new-terrors>

⁹⁰ <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2023/07/04/eu-fuelling-migration-tunisia-not-stopping-it>

⁹¹ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/19/tunisia-no-safe-haven-black-african-migrants-refugees>

⁹² <https://www.iom.int/news/deaths-migration-routes-mena-highest-2017-iom-2022-data-reveals#:~:text=Of%20the%20867%20deaths%20recorded,governorate%20at%20the%20northern%20border>

⁹³ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/19/tunisia-no-safe-haven-black-african-migrants-refugees>

everyone and migrants have become increasingly unpopular over the last 2-3 years as they are used as scapegoats by politicians and blamed for deteriorating living standards.

Ethiopians are more likely than other refugees to be assaulted and robbed because of the perceived threat to Nile waters with the building of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Street violence and rape, as well as targeted attacks from the Ethiopian embassy, are common (see OSG Report 61).

On 6 July, violence erupted in the Maadi district of Cairo, where most Oromo refugees live. Five young Oromo men were attacked by a mob of Egyptian youth, with knives, machetes and 'other metal objects', causing severe wounds to their heads and bodies. The armed youths used tuktuks to come and go through Maadi during the attack. One young Oromo was kidnapped and taken away by tuktuk, beaten, threatened with being killed and had his belongings and phone stolen. It was used, while he was being tortured, to extort money from relatives abroad.

In the evening of 10 July, there were more violent clashes between Oromo and Egyptian youth in Maadi after a young Oromo was stabbed in the chest and pronounced dead at Rayan Hospital. Two more received stab wounds. Others were injured with 'chain, metal and sticks.'

Thousands gathered and the situation got out of control. Police restored calm only with difficulty after appeals by elders were not heeded.

The perilous situation for refugees in Egypt, especially Oromo (see OSG Report 61), will not improve unless there is more dialogue and understanding between host and refugee populations.

However, the situation is poised to worsen rather than improve. The Egypt government, without consultation with refugees, UNHCR, other refugee agencies, or with its foreign supporters is drafting new legislation to take over the asylum process.

Former 'benign negligence' is likely to be replaced with more draconian measures and more discrimination.

New asylum law

A proposed National Asylum Legislation is being supported by the EU and UK despite their not being consulted in its development. (The EU and UK fund Frontex – an agency responsible for policing the Mediterranean and preventing migrants reaching Europe by returning them to Libya, Tunisia, Turkey etc.) Western countries pretend or believe there is no problem for refugees in Egypt.

Under the new legislation all migrants would register with the government, not UNHCR, with a view to the government taking over refugee status determination in future.

There are over 16,000 registered asylum-seekers from Ethiopia in Egypt, most of whom are Oromo. There are probably many more whose cases have been closed after being refused asylum – closed file cases. These thousands, like the those waiting six months or more for registration, live in fear of detention and deportation all the time.

The process is hard enough with UNHCR (see OSG Report 61). A government which is already hostile to refugees is likely to be much worse. More biased decision making, more detention, and more violence will drive migrants to Libya, from where a small proportion will reach Europe. Thousands will die in the desert or the sea (see above).

Already Egypt is limiting entry for foreign nationals due to the influx from war in Sudan. Initially 5000/day were crossing the border but numbers are now restricted to 2-300/day.

Refugee status may reduce risk of detention and deportation but the vast majority in Cairo are stuck there. Only 1% – the most extremely vulnerable – stand a chance of being resettled each year. No-one gets permanent residence. All have to renew their documents every year.

OSG encourages readers to contact their embassies in Cairo, asking them to urge Egyptian lawmakers to consult with refugees, refugee bodies and with donor governments before enacting new legislation.

Djibouti, Yemen, Saudi Arabia

Those who go northeast to Djibouti may try to register or claim asylum there but are still abused, sometimes rounded up by police and at risk of refoulement (see below).

Despite the risk of violence, sexual violence and extortion by traffickers and the risk of drowning in the Red Sea, thousands take boats from Djibouti to be dropped on the hostile shores of Yemen, from where they make perilous journeys to Saudi Arabia. *IOM* reported on 13 June that the most deaths on land routes for migrants throughout the Middle East and North Africa last year was in Yemen, where at least 795 died on their way to Saudi Arabia.⁹⁴

Further information on Djibouti, including forced evictions, refoulement and the killing of a refugee is given below.

The dangers in Yemen and the deliberate killing of hundreds of refugees by Saudi security forces around their border this year is described on pp. 40-42.

Djibouti: forced eviction, deportation, positive decisions, refoulement, unaccompanied women at risk



An OSG correspondent wrote from Djibouti on 13 May about the clearance of a settlement of crude shelters housing 700 Oromo and Somali migrants on 30 April and the deportation of up to 3000 Oromo on 12 May.

A TV news clip of security forces rounding up migrants and the destruction of their

homes by bulldozer in the Umbuli district of Djibouti town is on the OSG website (screenshots, left).⁹⁵ Although some of those arrested were registered asylum-seekers, none of those deported were registered asylum-seekers or mandated refugees, as far as is known. The last mandated refugee was released from Nagad detention centre on 20 May. Several

⁹⁴ <https://www.iom.int/news/deaths-migration-routes-mena-highest-2017-iom-2022-data-reveals#:~:text=Of%20the%20867%20deaths%20recorded,governorate%20at%20the%20northern%20border>

⁹⁵ <https://oromiasupport.org/video/oromo-migrants-being-cleared-from-umbuli-and-their-shanty-homes-being-bulldozed-and-destroyed/>

were detained for a few days in late May and put to work labouring on new police premises before being released.

One man fleeing from the roundup by police was killed by criminals. **Ramadan Ayaas** died in hospital on 2 May from knife wounds.

The correspondent wrote that registration with ONARS, the Djibouti government official refugee body was only possible for an Oromo if they paid 20-30,000 Djibouti Francs (\$100-150), or, if sponsored from abroad, \$1000. Eritreans, Tigrayans, Somalis and Yemenis do not have to pay, according to the correspondent. 'ONARS do not believe Oromo are persecuted' he said.

However, ten long-term asylum-seekers, including Ahmed-Nour Mohamed Omar, were finally granted refugee status by UNHCR and ONARS in May. Ahmed-Nour arrived in Djibouti in 1997, was a victim of refoulement (31 December 2012 – 1 September 2015 in Dire Dawa prison) and at least two attempts at arrest and refoulement.

Details have been obtained of a registered asylum-seeker who was subject to refoulement on 9 December 2022:

Ferhan Ibrahim Mohamed, dob 1.1.92, Attestation No 730 18H00047, was returned to Dire Dawa and is now being held in Hurso military camp where he is not allowed family visits.

Three unaccompanied women have been reported by refugee representatives in Djibouti to be at greater than average security risk:

Samiya Mahammed Boru – File No. 479 - 09C000313

Safiya Adam Bushra – File No. 479 - 11C00210

Aicha Mohamed Ali – File No. 479 – 00003655

Father of four forced to leave Ali Addeh

Sufiyan Ahmed lived with his wife and four children in Ali Addeh refugee camp, in the desert in the south of Djibouti (see OSG Report 48). He wrote on 7 June after being threatened and forced from the camp by Somali refugees because he was outspoken when a delegation from UNHCR visited the camp on 24 May. Sufiyan stated:

'I raise my hand to explain for these Delegation members as Oromo Refugee life in Djibouti. But I were rejected by the Chief of the Camp called AWALE and his group too. They said 'Sit down, Don't talk!' They try to put me under their pressure. But I refused to be silent, and I shouting 'I am Oromo first' then I got the attention of the delegations and said let him to talk . Then as I began talking in front of them they came and say 'Stop Stop' by Somali language. I was forced to stop my speech, but I immediately gave or present my written letter that describes in detail about Oromo Refugees. So these group started to follow me to take bad action. So I forced to leave the camp and separated from my children and came to Djibouti town hiding myself. And my life has no guarantee and my family too.'

Saudi Arabia and Yemen: Thousands killed as border guards deliberately fire on migrants

Air strikes by Saudi Arabia, supported and equipped by the USA and UK, had killed almost 24,000, including more than 9,000 civilians, in Yemen before June 2022, in a pattern of

indiscriminate bombing of Houthi-held civilian areas, amounting to War Crimes, according to evidence published by the Washington Post.⁹⁶

Although the bombing stopped in April 2022, refugees are still being killed in Yemen.

It was revealed three weeks ago that hundreds, probably thousands, of migrants have been killed by Saudi Arabia guards on the Yemen border between March 2022 and July 2023.

Human Rights Watch published its meticulous research on 21 August.⁹⁷

HRW interviewed eye-witnesses to killings, amounting to thousands, as Saudi border guards shot or fired mortars and other explosive munitions at groups of migrants attempting to enter the country along Yemen's northwest border in Saada governorate.

Atrocities against migrants were reported in the past but the present level of deliberate targeting and killing of groups of migrants started in early 2022. In that year, at least 795 were killed. The death toll in 2023 will be considerably higher.

Abuses which amount to Crimes Against Humanity are being committed against migrants who have already been subjected to beatings, rape and risk of drowning by smugglers taking them from Ethiopia to Djibouti and then Yemen (see map below, taken from HRW report).

Some are taken to migrant detention camps near the Saudi border. Others make their own way across Yemen. At all stages of their journeys, migrants are at risk of violence, sexual violence, extortion, detention and torture.

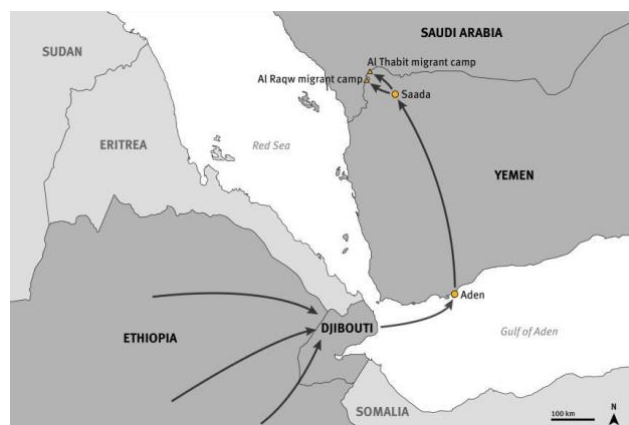
Despite the huge risks, migrants – mostly Oromo fleeing persecution or life-threatening poverty – continue coming. In 2022, 73,000 migrants arrived in Yemen. Over 86,000 arrived in the first seven months of 2023.

HRW gave detailed eye-witness accounts of how some are first detained in Saada town, 70 km from the border, where they are registered and processed by Houthi rebels and smugglers, working together.

Held in overcrowded camps, guarded by Houthi forces, up to 15 km from the border, those who can afford smugglers' fees are taken on dangerous, often mountainous, journeys over the border, hiding from Saudi border guards. Journeys last from several hours to several days.

Those who cannot afford the smuggler fees are either returned to atrocious conditions of detention in Saada or placed at the front of a walking migrant party at risk of rifle-fire and landmines.

As they approach and cross the border, migrants, mostly women, including many children, and mostly travelling in groups of 30-300, are fired upon by mortars and other exploding ordnance, causing horrific casualties as score of bodies, body parts and the injured and dying are strewn across mountainsides.



The route from Ethiopia to the border of Saudi Arabia and the Houthi-held Saada governorate of Yemen. HRW, 21 August 2023 (see footnote).

⁹⁶ https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/saudi-war-crimes-yemen/?itid=lk_interstitial_manual_10

⁹⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/08/21/they-fired-us-rain/saudi-arabian-mass-killings-ethiopian-migrants-yemen-saudi>

Eleven incidents were described, **in each of which over 70 were killed**. Saudi forces went among the dead and dying, beating survivors before dragging them off. They were threatened in front of piles of bodies, detained and beaten again before being returned to the border. Some migrants were then fired upon by heavy artillery as they ran back into Yemen.

Some were approached on foot by Saudi border guards when they crossed into the country and forced to choose which limb they wanted to be shot before being dumped at the border. Some bled to death. **One was shot dead for refusing to rape another migrant**. His brother was forced to comply.

Refoulement of Eritrean refugees from Ethiopia

Eritrean refugees, including minors, were rounded up in the Balderas area of Finfinnee/Addis Ababa and deported to Assab, Eritrea, in June. Ransom payments were demanded from police. At least 432 who could not or would not pay were sent back to Eritrea, contrary to international law. Eritreans in Sudan are paying \$5000 to smugglers in Metema to take them to Finfinnee/Addis Ababa.⁹⁸

On 13 July, UN-appointed human rights experts denounced the deportations as refoulement, stating that children had been separated from parents who had been deported and that the refoulement of refugees had occurred ‘amid reports of serious rights violations against them, including torture, ill-treatment, enforced disappearance, trafficking and arbitrary detention’ once they arrived in Eritrea. UNHCR reports 165,000 Eritreans in Ethiopia.⁹⁹

Oromo scientists and other academics lobby tanneries to reduce pollution of Awash river basin: ‘Oromia is a garbage site for Finfinnee’

On 24 August, the Oromo Studies Association and Oromo Scholars and Professionals Group, wrote to leather tanneries in Ethiopia, especially those whose effluent waste is dumped in the Awash River and its tributaries such as the Little Akaki River and the Mojo River arising in East Showa.

Heavily polluted water has devastated Karrayyu land in Fantale district, East Showa, where the Metahara sugar plantation has shrunk the lake and the effluent from the sugar factory has made watering holes undrinkable for the livestock on which the Karrayyu depend.

Toxic waste has destroyed Oromo farmland around Lake Koka.

The Oromo Studies Association and the Scholars and Professionals Group pointed out the inevitable high risk of pollution with toxins, especially heavy metals which is associated with the tanning process. These threaten human and animal health and longevity, as well as significantly damaging ecosystems. New life – foetus or baby – is particularly vulnerable to significant organ damage from heavy metals.

Despite being the source of drinking water downstream, dangerous levels of pollutants have been found in the Little Akaki River, which ‘failed all major water quality tests’. Oromo scientists pointed out that tanning caused the release of heavy metals – chromium, cadmium, lead; other metals – zinc, copper, iron, nickel; and compounds such as phosphates and nitrates in amounts beyond ‘international regulatory levels.’ The Mojo River is one of the most polluting tributaries of the Awash River.

⁹⁸ <https://www.eepa.be/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Situation-Report-EEPA-Horn-No.-457-26-June-2023-1.pdf>

⁹⁹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/07/1138662>

The Awash is a major river which runs 1200 km entirely within Ethiopia, from the west of Finfinnee, south to Lake Koka and then northeast by Adama, Metahara, Awash National Park and the town of Awash in Afar Region before entering a lake system on the border with Djibouti, with no outlet to the sea.

The scientists wrote to the Hafde Tannery, Walia Tannery, New Wing Addis Tannery, Modjo Tannery, Ethio-Japan Textile Company, Akaki Modern Tannery (Ethio Leather, Elico), Habesha Tannery (DX Industries) and others.

At a virtual conference organised by the Oromo Society of Scientists and Technologists on 26 August, presenters of papers from Oromia, Europe and North America gave evidence of pollution including by heavy metals (mercury, arsenic, cadmium and chromium) of several river systems in Oromia, especially those around Finfinnee/Addis Ababa. The Koche river, which runs into the Awash in Burayu, west of Finfinnee/Addis Ababa, has dangerously high levels of copper, manganese, zinc and iron, as well as the heavy metal chromium.

As one presenter said, ‘Oromia is considered a garbage site for Finfinnee.’

Abbreviations

APF	Amhara Popular (Peoples) Front
EAMRF	East African Medical Relief Association
EEPA	Europe External Programme with Africa
ENDF	Ethiopian National Defence Force
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OLLAA	Oromo Legacy, Leadership and Advocacy Association
OLA	Oromo Liberation Army
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OMN	Oromia Media Network
OSG	Oromia Support Group
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Region
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Program

EAMRF Appeal

The East African Medical Relief Foundation, a non-profit organisation based in California, is one of few bodies helping to supply medicines and equipment to west and south Oromia (see p.11).

Readers are encouraged to support EAMRF. Please contact the organisation at 100 Hacienda Ave, San Lorenzo, CA, United States. Tel: +1 510 640 4360, Email: Info@eamrf.org