



General Assembly

Distr.: General
XX May 2023

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-third session

19 June–14 July 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[29 May 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.

Amharas, The occulted ongoing genocide in Ethiopia

Right from the start of the conflict in Ethiopia, our NGO and a very few others alerted UN bodies such as the HRC, the HR Committee and the Commission of Experts on Ethiopia (1) to the alarming situation of persecution and systematic massacres of Amhara civilians on the margins of the conflict in Tigray.

Today, the conflict has ended, but the mass massacres of the Amhara ethnic group are ongoing, and we would like to alert the Special Advisor on Prevention of Genocide.

The genocide of Amhara commenced from as early as 1990 when the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) took power in Ethiopia with the ongoing and systematic massacre of ethnic Amhara and Agew people in Arsi, Harerghe; Benishangul-Gumuz, Metekel Zone, Southern region and in the forcefully annexed areas as west Tigray; Welkait-Tegede, Setit Humera and Raya.

The motivation for the killings arise from anti-Amhara and anti-Orthodox sentiments, and reasons linked to ethnic cleansing to create homogenous regions as part of the formation of ethnic federalism structures. The government has instrumentalised the following groups to carry out the genocide in various parts of the country.

- Oromo Liberation Army (also known as Shene or OLF), Welega and Northern Shewa
- Qeerroo (Oromo youth groups) Shashemene, Addis Ababa
- Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)
- TDF and Pro-TPLF groups such as the Samri youth groups in Mai kadra
- Gumuz militiamen in Benishangul-Gumuz/Metekel
- Other state collaborators in the Southern region of Ethiopia.

The outcomes of these genocide were:

- Numerous mass graves;
- The disappearance of 2 to 10 million Amharas that could not be accounted for or not be traced due to fatalities and enforced disappearances;
- Close to 10 million were survivors of these attacks, with food, shelter and health care needs;
- Close to 2 million were internally displaced (IDP);
- Women and children have suffered from genocidal rape and sexual violence;
- Sterilization without full, free and informed consent of Amhara women and sexual torture of the men
- Abduction and enslavement specially of young Amhara students;
- Destruction of many villages, towns, cities, harvest, and farm animals;
- Looting, destruction and burning of private properties and businesses owned by Amharas; and

- Looting, destruction and burning of places of prayer and worship such as Orthodox churches and mosques mostly used by Amharas.
- Trafficking of Amhara women to Middle East as domestic worker, salary paid to the government.

Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Oromo Liberation front (OLF) were formed with a manifesto and plan for Tigray and Oromia to eventually separate from Ethiopia after securing vast land and resources. The TPLF set up a false narrative and propaganda, accusing "Amhara People" of culturally assimilating other ethnic groups and portraying Tigray and other ethnic groups as a mere colony of Ethiopia. Once the TPLF controlled the central government, many revenge attacks were perpetrated against Amharas. The TPLF created a pro-Tigrean Apartheid government and ruled the country for 27 years with ethnolinguistically defined regional states, which were the source of ethnic tensions against Amharas.

Twelve mass graves were uncovered in the Wolkait region of Ethiopia with TPLF having killed and tortured about 59,000 Amharas between 1983 and 1990 during which individuals with ethnic Amhara identity were killed, and thrown into the Tekeze River. Furthermore, the 2007 population Census results revealed that over 2.5 million Amharas could not be traced, attributed mostly to the 20 years of ongoing massacres and enforced disappearances of the Amhara people. After the collapse of the TPLF-led government in 2018, the Oromo-led Prosperity Party secured the position to rule the country. Since then the original OLF plan to create an independent Oromo nation (Oromia for Oromo), is being executed with continuous massacres to reduce the overall number of Amharas in the region. Therefore, Amhara community has been suffering the tyranny and ethnic cleansing by the government for the past five years. Currently, more than 100 thousands Amharas living in Wellega, Benshangul-Gumuz and North Shewa have been massacred while close to one million have been internally displaced. The Amhara people were subjected to sustained extreme violence by Oromo nationalists; the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF)/Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), together with Oromo Special Forces (OSF) and the Queero (Oromo youth group) with full approval and active participation by Abiy Ahmed's Government. Ethnic cleansing of Oromia is

The OLF/OLA is armed and fully backed by the Abiy Ahmed's Government. It serves as the genocidal tool for the regime and work hand in hand with the Oromo leadership. The Oromia President, Mr. Shimelis Abdissa's televised speech of "We broke the Neftegna or Amhara" was used as an incitement for the launch of waves of violence against Amharas in many regions. In addition, just four days before the waves of the Amhara massacres in various zones and villages in Wollega, Abiy Ahmed made a politically charged statement: "Oromo have not received the large shares they deserved in the political and economic space— in security, leadership, workforce, business, and other sectors, while adding that the Amhara are the group that dominates the majority of positions in these structures". Polarizing and open remarks made by Abiy Ahmed also extend to accusations against residents of Addis Ababa for what he described as "deep-rooted hate against the Oromo".

The Burayu massacre occurred on the outskirts of Addis Ababa in September 2018; the Shashemene massacre in Oromia occurred in 2019; over 200 Amharas were massacred by armed Oromo groups as a result of the mass violence following Hachalu Hundessa's murder in 2020; during the same year, 86 people were killed following the violence perpetrated by Jawar Moammed's supporters; 17 University Amhara students were abducted in 2019 by the OLF-OLA armed groups from Dembi Dolo University; ongoing door-to-door mass executions in Ataye, Shewarobit, Jewuha, Senbete, Majete, Molale, and the surrounding villages. However, one of the 2022 deadliest massacres of the Amhara occurred on 18 June in the place named Tole and neighboring villages, in Gimbi Wollega of the Oromia region. The government blamed rebels, and witnesses accused the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) as perpetrators but the rebels blamed government forces. Witnesses from the area have stated that ethnic Amhara have been selected and "killed like

chickens"— they counted over 3000 bodies. They feared that the numbers could be higher since many Amhara have been abducted and could not be traced.

Separate ethnic cleansing projects are underway in Addis Abeba through forced removal of Amharas, property destructions, mass Oromo transfer from other areas with settlement programs to change the demography of the city. Many Amhara civilians have been killed, thousands of homes destroyed on the outskirts of the capital Addis Ababa (which sits within Oromia), and hundreds of thousands displaced. Anyone talking about the violence, journalists, human rights workers, lawyers or students, run the risk of arrest.

Amhara people were also the greatest victims of the war by the Federal Government with the TPLF. According to media and Amnesty International reports, fighters affiliated with the TPLF deliberately killed Amhara people, gang-raped women and girls – some as young as 14 and as old as 72 – and looted private and public property in northern Ethiopia's Amhara Region. Amhara people were victims of mass extrajudicial killings of civilians throughout the war including Mai Kadra massacre, Humera massacre, Chenna massacre, Kombolcha massacre, Ataye massacre, and Kobo massacre where victims were buried in mass graves. The Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) left the Amhara people defenceless against the TPLF army, with Abiy Ahmed mockingly declaring that “We will not teach the people of Begemeder (Gondar) how to defend themselves against TPLF”. Therefore, Amhara people had to fend for themselves to protect themselves from the attack through increased resistance from local militias and armed residents (Fano), and the Amhara Special Forces fighting siding the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF).

The Oromo Apartheid regime takes no obvious punitive measures against perpetrators of the genocide as it is part of the genocide programme, and there is a lack of formal acknowledgments of the deaths of Amharas from officials. Instead, Abiy Ahmed's comment about the situation in July 2022 was: “It is an enemy who says that seedlings must not be planted while people are dying, it is an enemy. Do not listen. We plant seedlings at the place where a person dies, at least so that the corpse has a shade”.

We urge the Special Advisor on Prevention of Genocide and the HRC to urgently investigate the mass massacres of the Amhara ethnic group and the ongoing genocide in order to first put an end to it, and to ensure that the perpetrators are called to account.

Stop Amhara Genocide, NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

(1) <https://freedomofconscience.eu/52nd-human-rights-council-arbitrary-arrest-and-detention-journalists-and-activists-reporting-on-the-persecution-of-amharas/>

<https://freedomofconscience.eu/hrc-51st-session-about-the-18-june-2022-mass-massacres-of-amharas-at-gimbi-western-part-of-ethiopia/>

<https://freedomofconscience.eu/hrc-50-incidents-targeting-the-amhara-community/>

<https://freedomofconscience.eu/statement-delivered-136th-session-human-rights-committee-10-oct-2022-04-nov-2022-on-ethiopia-incidents-targeting-the-amhara-community-in-2022/>