



# AVERTING CIVIL WAR IN ETHIOPIA

## AN EMERGENCY MANIFESTO

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This discussion paper is prepared with inputs from many prominent individuals and groups in Ethiopia and abroad. A preliminary survey in which 556 participants took part shows 67.6% support the proposed international campaign. This discussion document is shared with the public to foster discussion by all stakeholder at home and abroad. The purpose is not to form a new organization. It is to encourage existing ones to form an alliance and launch a well-coordinated campaign. There are encouraging signs.

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Sofia Tessema

"They shot my boy. When we tried to help him, they said they will kill us" (4 News)



Why are we being ignored' plead the hungry in Ethiopia's Afar" (Agence France)

What is behind the Violence in Ethiopia's Gambella region (VOA)



*"The people of Amaro are surrounded by Oromo on three directions. We are denied access to other regions. It is hard to explain our suffering in words. We are invaded and butchered, and our existence as an ethnic group is in peril."*

**Zemene Hailu**, [11th Regular Session of the Parliament, March 2023](#)

*"Some Oromo fools may not understand the strategy behind building Sheger City encircling Finfinnee. Our enemies understand our intentions."*

**Shimelis Abdissa**, President Oromo Region, [Speech for Oromo Youth, 2023](#)

*"Anti-government extremists who want to overthrow the federal government will see the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of people over night."*

**PM Abiy Ahmed**, [Televised Speech, 2021](#)

*"Extremists who want to instigate conflict to overthrow the government should know that the consequence will be many times bloodier than the red terror in the 1970s."*

**PM Abiy Ahmed**, [Televised Speech, 2023](#)

*"Today's Ethiopia is at a juncture similar to that of Rwanda when it found itself at the dawn of genocide."*

**Addisu Arega**, Head of PP International Relations, [Facebook 2023](#)





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“What does Oromo-PP want?” The question is critical because the answer will take us to the source of the spiraling crisis. In his 76-page recent manifesto, Jawar Mohammed, a prominent Oromo activist, attributed the problem to Oromo-PP’s desire to impose the Oromo identity and culture on other regions.

Since its formation, the Oromo Prosperity Party (Oromo-PP) has gone through subtle but intense infighting between extremist and moderate factions. Over the last year-and-half, the extremist faction that is driven by the *Oromummaa* doctrine has increasingly controlled the levers of power and the PM has progressively become a part of it. *Oromummaa* is in equal measure part cult and part political dogma. Its adherents uphold it above religion and family. Its leaders have publicly declared their Oromo identity takes precedence over their religion.

Oromummaa’s objective is more than creating a hegemonic Oromo rule over the nation’s economic and political spheres. It also involves creating a hegemonic cultural superiority. Its implementation tool is *Mogassa* – an Oromo tradition of subjugation by brutal force.

The President of the Oromo region, Shimelis Abdisa, did not mince words when announcing that Oromo-PP’s plan for “[the Future of Ethiopia](#)” is *Gedaa* - a 16<sup>th</sup> century traditional Oromo governance system. Shimelis asserted that “[The Prosperity Party is built in such a way to advance the interest of Oromo](#)” and that his government is “[spending billions erecting Oromummaa markers in Addis Ababa](#),” a city where [only 19% of the population is Oromo](#). .”



In its blind pursuit of hegemonic *Oromummaa*, the government does not tolerate any protest - political or otherwise. On February 15, [security forces killed six and injured more than 15 people](#) in Gurage zone to crackdown protest against chronic lack of water. Gurage members of the PP and peaceful Gurage opposition leaders, who advocate for an autonomous administration, have become targets of government security forces.

The Honorable Hassan Sheikh's complaint at the Regular Session of the Parliament on March 28, 2023, reflects the sentiment felt by all non-Oromo ethnic groups large and small. His impassioned appeal expressed fear that the survival of his ethnic group (አማሮ) is in danger.

“የአማሮ ህዝብ በሶስት በኩል በአሮሞ የተከበበ በሞሆኑ ከሌሎች አገራት ብሄሮች ጋር እንዳይገናኝ መንገድ ተዘግቶበታል። ለመግለጽ በሚያዳግት እና ይህ ነው በማይባል አፈና እና በመከራ ውስጥ ይገኛል። ከመወረርና ከመጨፍጨፉም አልፎ እንደ አንድ ብሄር ህልውናው አደጋ ላይ ነው። ...”

[The people of Amaro are encircled by Oromo on three directions. We are denied access to other regions. It is hard to explain our suffering in words. We are invaded and butchered, and our existence as an ethnic group is in peril.]

Although the conflicts are more escalated in some regions than in others, the crisis is nationwide. However, the PM and Oromo-PP are recklessly creating a dangerous narrative to target the Amhara as a political distraction. It is an open secret that President Shimelis' reference to “our enemies” is Amhara. The recent invitation and warm reception of TPLF leaders by President Shimelis and his high-level officials is a reckless red flag to use the Amhara-Tigray border conflict as a carrot and stick bait in the Oromo PP's political calculus. It is hard to imagine this was done without the knowledge and approval of the PM.

As part of the new Oromo-Tigray flirting, the TPLF is gearing up to use the current crisis as an opportune time to recapture the contested lands. The Oromo-PP and TPLF fondling will lead to an Amhara-Eritrea alliance. That will be a dangerous development. The Voice of America is right in noting “[more civil war is spreading in the country.](#)”

It is important to remember that before the government-led genocide, Rwanda's population was less than 8 million. Ethiopia's population is more than the four most recent genocide countries combined (Rwanda, Bosnia, Sudan, and Myanmar).

The crisis is one spark away from plunging the nation and the Horn of Africa into catastrophe of biblical proportions. The PM is upping the crisis by instructing Amhara special forces and militia to disarm. Though the policy is supposed to be for all regions, the focus is on Amhara followed by Somali region.





According to the Pretoria agreement that was signed on November 3, 2022, the TPLF was supposed to disarm. More than four months later, it has not complied with the agreement and the federal government has not taken any action against it. In comparison, within a week after the government instructed the Amhara to disarm, Federal forces are surrounding Amhara garrisons to disarm them. Two members of the Amhara special forces were killed during a standoff.

The disarmament decision is necessary for a lasting peace if it is planned and undertaken in a transparent manner with verification and trust inspiring process in place. The Amhara has legitimate reasons to question its timing and purpose. During the Orthodox Church conflict, the PM summoned elders to his office and told them the conflict was the work of extremist Amhara forces who want to overthrow his government. This is the same PM who threatened to slaughter hundreds of thousands of people overnight if they are threats to his government. The Amhara are the people the President of the Oromo region often refers as “our enemies.”

Amhara must reject the demand to disarm until its concerns are fully addressed and confidence inspiring steps are taken. All Amhara young and old must peacefully protect the special forces garrisons with sit-in protest taking turns. If the Oromo-PP led government declares war, the Amhara must protect itself. Protecting oneself when one is in possession of arms is better than fighting after surrendering its arms.

The international community (IC) must weigh in with a sense of urgency and resolve. Apart from the threat of human catastrophe of biblical proportions, the IC cannot be oblivious to the impending danger to global trade and security. [More than 10 percent of global trade](#) and [40 % of Asia's trade with Europe](#) pass through the Red Sea. Since Ethiopia is the anchor nation for the region’s stability, as Ethiopia goes so goes the Horn region.

Our national and international campaign follows a three-pronged strategy. The first and most important task is building a broad coalition to avert the impending crisis. The analogy we use is safely landing the proverbial plane with a malfunctioning engine that is flying through turbulence air. We believe saving the plane from breaking up in midair and safely landing the damaged plane must be our priority.

Second, we advocate for change and accountability within the constitutional order. Of recent, we have witnessed growing dissatisfaction within the PP. A significant number of PP members did not attend the PM’s recent briefings. When the Parliament met to remove the terrorist designation on TPLF, the meeting barely met quorum, and over 60 of them voted against the measure. Majority members of Gurage-PP who voted in favor of autonomy for Gurage are not happy campers with the PM and Oromo-PP. The threat Oromo-PP poses that the representative of Amaro zone articulated above is a threat felt by all regions.



The campaign must focus on mobilizing and supporting members of PP to challenge the Oromo-PP. Lumping all regional PPs with Oromo-PP is wrong. For example, many in the Amhara region are anti Amhara-PP and call for its abolishment. This is self-defeating and dangerous, when there is no other viable Amhara organization. A weak Amhara organization is better than no Amhara organization.

What needs to be done is working with the rank-and-file members and creating pressure on the leadership to stand up for their people. In the meantime, the population of Amhara must mobilize a campaign to recall Amhara-PP leaders and replace them with representatives who will defend Amhara's interest more aggressively. Similar effort must be made to recall complicit PP representatives of Addis Ababa. The situation is favorable to create a critical mass within PP to challenge the PM and Oromo-PP. This is the most viable option in the short term without risking the disintegration of Ethiopia.

Third, a strategic international campaign is needed, with three specific action points.

- **Mobilizing international pressure against Ethiopian military and police leaders** not to follow order from the PM to engage in any atrocity against the people.
- **Launching international investigations**, expanding the mandate of the UN investigation to include atrocities committed in Oromia and Addis Ababa.
- **Imposing international sanctions** with exemption to humanitarian aid and programs such as AGOA that directly benefits the poor.

Concurrently, as part of the international sanction, the campaign will mobilize the diaspora not to send remittance through official channels and avoid visiting Ethiopia except for family emergency. Remittance is more than what Ethiopia gets from the IC, including the World Bank and IMF. The diaspora has the means to influence policy and it must act decisively.

Remember that external pressure was one of the factors that forced TPLF to peacefully relinquish power in 2018. Once TPLF lost its ability to keep the country stable, the IC turned against it. Today, the IC has come to the realization that the PM is a destabilizing leader and dangerous for the Horn of Africa. The campaign will capitalize on this.

In sum, our campaign is peaceful and all-inclusive. Its aim is to avert the spiraling crisis that is tearing the country apart. Our win-win strategy is focused on pressuring the government to change course. In this regard, we demand critical steps of accountability that the PM must take. Should he refuse to do so, there is a trigger point that will escalate the campaign to peacefully remove him from office, following the constitutional process.





## I. SPIRILING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISES

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Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his Oromo-PP party came to power in 2018 on the heels of a national upheaval that was borne out of political and economic crises. Once again, in 2023, Ethiopia is confronted with similar circumstances that can potentially lead the nation to a national upheaval with far more calamitous consequences of a civil war.

We must ask: Why did Jawar Mohammed, in his 76-page recent manifesto say: “All Oromo’s must be ashamed of Oromo-PP’s leadership.” What made him lament that people are “wondering if Oromo can govern the country?” His statements are driven by the state of the nation’s security, economic and political rapid deterioration.

Numbers do not lie. And this is what they are showing. In 2018, there were [1.6 million internally displaced people](#). In 2021, [“Ethiopia set a world record for displacements in a single year: 5.1 million.”](#) In 2023, [there are 4.6 million Ethiopians](#) displaced.

In 2018, there were 30,000 political prisoners. Today, the number is much higher. Further, under Prime Minister Abiy, Ethiopia has become [“one of the worst jailers of journalists in sub-Saharan Africa.”](#) Journalists and activists are routinely abducted in a broad daylight, blindfolded, taken to the Oromo region, and tortured in private prisons. There are also cases of arbitrary arrests of journalists and prominent activists.

To top it off, opposition parties are prevented from holding annual meetings as required by the laws of the National Election Board (NEB). Rogue Oromo officials routinely threaten hotel owners not to rent meeting halls to opposition parties. On March 15, 2023, the Ethiopian National Election Board issued a press release, noting [“illegal detention, intimidation, and harassment of members and leaders of political parties.”](#) The Board further expressed concern that opposition parties are denied the right to hold general meetings.

The situation is equally grim on the economic front. In 2018, Ethiopia’s [inflation rate was 13.8 percent](#). At the time, the average inflation for Sub Saharan African countries was 4.1 percent. Under Prime Minister Abiy, in 2021, [inflation in Ethiopia skyrocketed to 26.4](#) percent. In January 2022, Ethiopia’s inflation was [amongst the worst 10 inflationary countries](#) in the world. For 2023, IMF’s projection for [Ethiopia is 28.6 percent](#). The corresponding figure for African countries is between [3 and 6 percent](#).

The IMF attributes Ethiopia’s high inflation to [“loose fiscal policy.”](#) This means the government is borrowing and spending beyond its means. Over the last six months alone the



Government [borrowed 100 billion Birr](#) from the national Bank of Ethiopia. Other attributable factors include the war, the government's exchange rate deflation policy and Oromo-PP imposed restrictions on movements of people, goods, and services across state lines.

Since Prime Minister Abiy and his Oromo-PP party took office, Ethiopia's cereal and other food imports have increased from 1.16 billion dollars in 2018/2019 to 3.61 billion dollars in 2021/2022, representing a 312% jump. During the same period, Ethiopia's international food aid has skyrocketed from \$142.5 million to \$1.17 billion, registering 821% jump.

In 2018, there were [7.88 million Ethiopians in need of international food assistance](#). Under Prime Minister Abiy, [20.4 million people need international food assistance](#). In 2023, the Prime Minister chose to export wheat, deepening the nation's food crisis. The consequence is a very high food inflation rate of [33.6%](#) that is 17% higher than the general inflation rate.

The latest economic news (April 8, 2023) is "Ethiopian coffee exporters have defaulted on 394 coffee export contracts since October 2022." The Reporter noted: "The exporters say they have no choice but to breach their contract because the international coffee price has dropped below the local price in Ethiopia, slashing the profit margin they had anticipated." One of the consequences of a sky-high inflation is losing competitive edge in export markets.

Yet another bad headline reads: "The Ethiopian Meat Producers and Exporters Association stopped exporting meat as of 06 April 2023." The Association attributed the problem to foreign currency embezzlement. Registered meat producers and exporters are sidelined, while fly-by-night illegal Oromo slaughterhouses are given access to foreign exchange.

The economy is under stress on many fronts. According to the Heritage Foundation, ["Ethiopia's economic freedom score is 48.3, making its economy the 155th freest in the 2023 Index. Its score is 1.3 points lower than last year."](#)

Similarly, the Hong Kong-based Fitch Rating has [consistently downgraded Ethiopia's credit ratings](#) on its ability to meet its financial obligations. Ethiopia rating history shows: November 2018 (B+) October 2019 (B), June 2020 (CCC), February 2021 (CCC) and December 2022 (CCC-).

According to International Transparency (the world's authoritative body on corruption index), in 2022, [Ethiopia scored worse than the previous year](#). The report noted that the country's long-term trend was an improvement. In other words, Oromo-PP led government is worse than TPLF when it comes to corruption. Even worse, corruption in 2022 was worse than in 2021. The 2023 corruption index is not available, but all indications are it will be worse than 2022. Everything is going down.





## II. THE PRIME MINISTER'S AND OROMO-PP'S FAILURE TO GOVERN ETHIOPIA

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There are at least two reasons why the Oromo-led government has utterly failed in just five short years compared to the Tigrayan-led government that lasted for 27-years. The first reason, which is also raised in Jawar Mohamed's recent 67-page recent manifesto, is that most of the Cabinet members and government officials are not appointed on merit: knowledge, skills, experiences, and integrity. By and large, the nation is led by political cadres whose primary qualifications are complete loyalty and unconditional service to the Prime Minister.

The second reason is an extremist Oromo narrow nationalism that demands allegiance to Oromummaa (an Oromo cult) above everything else. We have heard Jawar Mohammed, Shimelis Abdissa, and many other Oromo leaders stating that they are first Oromo before they are Christians or Muslims. We have seen them take pride in their belief that they are first Oromo, and second Ethiopian if and only if Ethiopia submits to their whims.

We have witnessed one of the most prominent Oromo political leaders, Bekele Gerba, proposing "not to do business with anyone who does not speak Afaan Oromo" and attributing the decline of the Oromo language to interethnic marriage. We have also heard Oromo activists calling for a mass divorce to free Oromos from their Amhara wives and husbands.

In many ways, members of the extremist Oromo political class including those in leadership positions operate as though they are Oromo before they are human. They see everything from the tenets of religion to the sanctity of family relations through an ethnic lens.

The political crisis and the unprecedented cruelty including stoning religious leaders to death, hanging a defenseless person alive upside down and killing innocent children and elders with machetes are results of the *Oromummaa* phenomenon.



## DEMOLISHED AND EVICTED



### III. THE INVASION OF OROMUMMAA & THE BREAKDOWN OF LAW AND ORDER

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Where ethnicity supersedes humanity as the basis for social order, cruelty becomes the norm. This is what we are seeing in current Ethiopia. Pregnant and nursing women are evicted with their children and their elderly and sick parents. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission's report on home "[demolitions and forced evictions](#)" by the Oromo government, reads in part:

**The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission has witnessed government forces, including police, special forces and militia demolish and forcefully evict people. Also present at the scene were stick wielding civilians.**

We had expected the PP executive committee would consider the dire situations of the country and address it genuinely. Unfortunately, we are witnessing a repeat of the TPLF's playbook from 2017.

The five-point announcement issued by the PP executive committee fell far short of acknowledging the nature of the crisis, let alone taking accountability. Unfortunately, the executive committee resorted to blaming the opposition and the media. This was a pretext to target the opposition and the media. Indeed, as has become clear since the press release, the media and prominent opposition figures have been targeted.





The blind pursuit of Oromummaa is at the center of the nation's crisis. This is particularly true in at least five areas: (1) Oromo extremists' schoolyard whining *writ large*; (2) Usurpation and Oromoization of national history; (3) Attempt to split the Ethiopian Orthodox Church; (4) Violation of human and citizenship rights; and (5) Violation of property and economic rights.

#### ***IV.1. Oromo Extremists' Unending Schoolyard Whining Writ Large***

The Oromo extremists' never-ceasing grievance politics that presents the Oromo as the primary victim of "an Amhara forced assimilation" is the staple of their political narrative. But they say nothing about Oromo-forced assimilations of others including the Amhara. Historically "the Oromo has assimilated more than they were assimilated by others" through the Mogassa tradition. This is documented in Professor Mohammed Hassen's (an Oromo historian) [widely referred book](#) that is published by the Oxford University Press. The book thoroughly documented the Oromo forcefully absorbed "Cushitic and Semitic-speaking tribes as clients or serfs (gabbaro) into their tribal structure."

The conquered tribes were forced to abandon, their names, languages, and traditions. They were politically and militarily baptized to become Oromo in every facet of their existence. To top it off, Mohammed's book acknowledges that new fictitious Oromo genealogies were created for the forcefully assimilated tribes so they can count "[their ancestors several generations back](#)" to a "[hypothetical](#)" Oromo lineage.

Oromo extremists lament, for example, that Oromo cities such as Adama and Bishoftu were given Amhara names - Nazriet and Debre Ziet, respectively. But they say nothing about hundreds of originally non-Oromo cities large and small that have been changed to Oromo names during the era of Oromo expansion. What is today Kemisse and its surrounding in Wello was called Gegn (ገን). Western Wello including Worehimenu, Worellu, and Borena used to be Bete Amhara (ቤተ አማራ).

There is no doubt that the primary danger for Ethiopia's survival is Oromo extremism whose demands cannot be met because it will never cease until the entire precept of the nation-state system submits to their unending schoolyard whining *writ large*. Sadly, the problem with Oromo extremists does not end with whining. They act on their desire to Oromize Ethiopia through Mogassa 2.0.

#### ***IV.2. Usurpation and Oromoization of National History***

One thing Ethiopians are known for is their shared pride in Ethiopian history - Adwa being the crown jewel and symbol of Ethiopian unity. There is no ethnic group that has not paid



in blood and lives to make Adwa the pride of all Ethiopians. Sadly, the Oromo-PP ethnicized the national commemoration day of Adwa and rebranded it as an exclusively Oromo legacy. In 2023, modern-day Oromo politicians are doing what their 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century ancestors did during Mogassa.

The first critical step in the Oromoization of Adwa was erasing the legacy of Emperor Menilik. Historically, the official Adwa celebration was held at Menilik Square. The Oromo-PP moved the event to a new venue at Meskel Square to disassociate the event from the Emperor.

Adding insult to injury, the celebration at Meskel Square was by “invitation only.” Those who invited themselves to the national and public commemoration of Adwa and sported t-shirts with Menilik’s picture were forcefully disbursed, beaten and arrested. They were also denied the right to peacefully celebrate the day at Menilik square. Those who showed up at Menilik Square with Menilik’s banners and t-shirts faced brutal beating and arrest. These are not people from one ethnic group but from all ethnicities in Ethiopia.

The second step involving the Oromoization of Adwa was putting Oromos as the face of Adwa on all official Adwa celebration flyers and banners. All flyers and logos that were produced by narrow nationalist Oromo officials shows two Oromos as the face of Adwa.

Some people suggest the objective is to shift the glory of Adwa from North (Amhara and Tigray) to South. This is not true. Otherwise, iconic non-Oromo Adwa heroes who came from Gurage, Hadiya, Wolaita, Somali, etc. would have been recognized.

#### ***IV.3. The Attempt to split the Ethiopian Orthodox Church***

Apart from Adwa, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) and the Ethiopian Islamic community are seen as the nation’s unifying forces. Not only have the two religions survived in peace and harmony, but they have also taught their followers to respect and honor each other’s religions. Extremist Oromo politicians see the EOTC as a northern institution (Amhara and Tigray) and sought to break it apart.

In February 2023, the Prime Minister and Oromo-PP instigated a national crisis by supporting renegade Orthodox Bishops who violated the Ethiopian Orthodox Church’s guiding principle and went on to establish an Oromo Orthodox branch. The Oromo-PP not only provided political support to the splinter group but also sent its special police force to detain bishops, arrest church administrators, and Orthodox church believers in Oromia. This existential crisis was averted only because the Orthodox Church was careful not to escalate the crisis.





#### ***IV.4. Violation of Human and Citizenship Rights***

Ethiopians traveling from the Amhara region are routinely barred from entering Addis Ababa. This was done by the Oromia regional government in tandem with the Addis Ababa mayor's office. Moreover, the city administration routinely evicts non-Oromo people from their homes, often bulldozing their residences and business facilities – especially on the city's outskirts.

#### ***IV.5. Violations of Property and Economic Rights***

Incessant corruption by Oromo-PP officials and Oromo oligarchs run the gamut from land grabs to monopolistic control over channels of wholesale and retail distribution of factory produce and food supply chains. If there is one group benefiting from the high food inflation, it is the Oromo-PP protected oligarchs. They use their government contacts to block entry of food products into Addis Ababa and see food price rocket to reap hefty profits.

Businesses predominantly owned by non-Oromos face disruptions for days on end without legal proceedings as was the case with Bajaj taxis in Addis. Nearly 10,000 Bajaj owners who were legally operating with government issued licenses were left without work and income until the government determined the necessity of Bajaj transport. The Bajaj restriction was ultimately lifted after public uproar exposed the decision was aimed at targeting people from Amhara and Southern Peoples regions who constitute the majority of the Bajaj business.

The most damage to the economy is attributable to restrictions on free movement of goods and services to Addis Ababa. Though the Amhara are the targets of the policy, other tribes have become collateral victims as Addis Ababa is transit city connecting different regions. For example, a businessman from Southern People region who travels to Amhara region through Addis Ababa to sell his merchandise faces restrictions to return to his home base through Addis Ababa.

Similarly, Amhara businessmen are finding it increasingly difficult to take their produce to Addis Ababa and to other regions through Addis Ababa. The consequences to the nation's economy are incalculable. As noted above, part of the high food inflation is due partly to criminal restrictions on free movements of goods and services. Unfortunately, the architects of the policy are ignorant to understand the broader implications of on the nation's economy.



## IV. THE CONSTITUTIONAL DUTIES OF CONSCIENTIOUS MEMBERS OF PP

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Conscientious members of the PP have constitutional and moral obligations to stop the culture of impunity that has become the hallmark of extremist elements in Oromo-PP. Ethiopians from all walks of life at home and abroad are encouraged by the recent pushbacks from the Amhara-PP. Even more encouraging is the fact that the pushback is triggered by the rank-and-file members of the party. We have also witnessed resistance to other land grab efforts by Oromo forces in adjacent Somali, Gambella, and Sidama regions.

Ethiopians at home and in the Diaspora are not simply observing these developments. They are prepared and ready to join the resistance and provide support to the peace-loving and democracy thirsting people of Ethiopia. The people of Ethiopia want to see a change of course and accountability to thwart the spiraling crisis. This must start with accountability in the following specific areas.

- Identifying and bringing to justice those who are running private prisons and terrorizing the people of Addis Ababa.
- Investigating high-profile corruption cases, including (1) The Purchase of 200 Chinese buses, (2) the 40 million Birr that was deposited in the private account of the Addis Ababa mayor, (3) the 59 percent drop in gold export, and (4) recent criminal land transfers.
- Freezing land leasing in Addis Ababa and all major cities, until a full investigation of criminal land distribution practices is undertaken, and a system of check and balance is established for the future. A case in point is the recent takeover of the Bole sub city; woreda 17 & 23 community centers. The demolished community centers must be rebuilt and returned to the community.
- Freezing demolition and evictions. Establish an independent commission to review the demolition and eviction process and fully redress victims who were wrongly and unjustly evicted.
- Delaying the disarmament of regional special forces and militias until trust between the Federal government and regional governments is built. In due



course, a joint committee consisting of all regional special forces and militia leaders need to be established to develop and oversee a fully transparent and verifiable implementation program.

- Demanding full disclosure of the Prime Minister's and the First Lady's financing sources for their flagship projects and ensuring that in the future they will be fully transparent and comply with the law of the land.
- Reining in the Prime Minister monocratic governance to make sure that his decisions are made in the best interest of the nation.

These are confidence-building steps that the PM must take to demonstrate his intent of averting the spiraling crisis from reaching a point of no return. If he chose to continue his current destructive path, Ethiopians at home and abroad have no choice but to organize a peaceful resistance movement to remove him from office through the constitutional process.





## V. A PEACEFUL AND ALL-INCLUSIVE MOVEMENT

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Our campaign is peaceful, inclusive, and focused on a win-win strategy. We believe full heartedly that there will be no peace in Ethiopia that does not actively seek the participation of the people of Oromo.

We see the people of Oromo as victims of Oromo extremism. The number of Oromos in prison and the number killed (including Aba Gadaas) both by Oromo-PP and Oromo-Shene do not get the attention they deserve. Jawar's claim in his manifesto that "the number of Oromo casualty under Oromo-PP in five years is more than the number under Emperor Haile Selassie, Derg and TPLF combined" may be exaggerated but it is not too far from the truth.

The recent results of the national secondary school leaving exams in which Oromo students performed far worse than other regions including Amhara and Southern People regions is an even more detrimental consequence for the future of the people of Oromo. It should also be noted that Oromo farmers were the primary victims of the Oromo-PP's policy that forced wheat farmers to sell their produce at a price that is far below the market value. No one is immune from the PM's and Oromo-PP's failed leadership.

### ***VI.1. Crowding Out Extremist Forces***

The state of our country is brittle. As much as people need to protest, precaution is needed to avoid escalating the crisis. Ethiopians of all political persuasion and belief must resist the temptation for a zero-sum-game mindset and push back against all extremist forces. One needs to follow Oromo social media how much attention extremist Ethiopianist forces get from Oromo extremists because they are used as a fuel to keep the polarizing blaze alive.

### ***VI.2. The Role of Small Ethnic Groups***

The story that the Constitution honors and protects nations and nationalities is fiction. In a country where ethnic rights serve as proxy through which individual rights are conferred on citizens, the overwhelming number of ethnic groups are not even mentioned in the constitution.

Those who are mentioned in the Constitution, are represented in the Council of Federation, but not in the People's House of Representatives. The Council of Federation has no constitutional right to approve or block laws. This is an area that opposition forces must focus on to bring all marginalized ethnic groups from Tigray to Amaro together.



### ***VI.3. Professional Associations and Civil Society Organizations***

No part of the Ethiopian society is immune from the growing and worsening crisis that has befallen the nation under Prime Minister Abiy. Teachers, physicians, businessmen, farmers, public employees, the military, the police, street venders, taxi drivers and everybody in between are suffering from the out-of-control inflation.

The Prime Minister lectures public servants (including teachers and physicians) they cannot request for salary increases. He then turns around and prints money in hundreds of billions to finance his vanity projects, including his new mega palace. This increases the inflation rate and deteriorates the purchasing power of all income groups, most particularly the purchasing power of low-income households.

All indications are that he plans to continue printing money to finance his vanity projects. Economists say that “printing money is stealing from the poor.” This will resonate with Oromo farmers who are forced to sell their wheat produce below the market price to make the Prime Minister’s “wheat export” sham a reality. One of this campaign’s focus will be mobilizing professional associations and civic society organizations.

### ***VI.4. Military Leaders and Officers***

The military has suffered more than any part of society under the current Prime Minister. An entire special force was decimated trying to capture TPLF leaders who were hiding in the most fortified terrain in Tigray. Over 10,000 members of the EDF were captured by TPLF with their weapons, including tanks and heavy armors.

The military has paid a steep cost in life and limb. Their families are suffering from the deteriorating economy and soaring inflation. Those who were wounded during the war are begging on the streets. The PM is focused on vanity projects to fan his fancy and feed his ego rather than addressing the needs of veterans and their families.

Military leader must refuse to be involved in the PM’s war against the people. They have sworn obligations to defend the nation, including from the PM and Oromo-PP when they undermine the integrity and sovereignty of the nation. Any campaign for a lasting peace must focus on public relations work to sensitize and raise the awareness of the military.



## VI. SEVEN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE POINTS TO AVERT THE CRISIS

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Over the last five years, we have learned two things about the PM. First, he has no principled position. We have seen him support the Oromo Orthodox renegade Bishops only to drop them after he faced an overwhelming opposition from the EOTC. We have seen him vacillate between Pan-Ethiopianist and Oromo nationalist positions at the drop of a hat.

Second, he has been weakened by the TPLF and Oromo-Shene wars. He epitomizes the proverbial Emperor with no cloth. We have seen him threatening the EOTC and its supporter “with tools of violence that [they] have never seen before,” only to blink when they called his bluff. He promised Ethiopians that he would give his neck before he submits to international demands and sanctions, only to submit to the IC’s every whim.

We believe change can come only if conscientious member of the PP and the people of Ethiopia work together to reign in the Prime Minister and his Oromo-PP. In this regard, we believe there are **Seven pressure points** that will force the Prime Minister to change his political power calculus and avert the spiraling crisis. This involves a well-coordinated national and international campaign. The international campaign represents not a choice of convenience, but an option of last resort borne out of necessity.

### *VII.1. Four Coordinated Domestic Campaigns*

**The first and most potent campaign** is mobilizing the silent majority. We have seen the power of the silent majority from the EOTC experience. The key to getting the silent majority to rise is forging a win-win strategy that avoids extremist positions and find a peaceful approach.

**The second domestic campaign** is holding the Prime Minister accountable. This is where work needs to be done to involve disgruntled members of the PP in the Parliament. In many places, the Constitution affirms the people’s representatives “shall have the duty” to honor and protect the people’s constitutional rights. Article 12 outlines the “Functions and Accountability of Government” and affirms “Any public official or elected representative shall be made accountable for breach of his official duties.” This includes honoring and protecting the constitutional order and holding those who violate it accountable.

Article 35 empowers the People’s representatives to “call the Prime Minister and Ministers for questioning and inspect the activities of the executive branch.” It stipulates further that the House of Representatives can “deliberate on any item within the powers of the executive where one third of the members of the Council so request. The Council shall have the power



to deliberate and take any measure it deems appropriate.” This includes removing him from his position as the Prime Minister and Chair of PP.

**The third domestic campaign** must focus on recalling members of the Peoples Representatives who fail to uphold their oath. In accordance with the Constitution, a national campaign will mobilize a recall campaign to remove members of the House of Representatives from office and replace them with people who will honor their oath and perform their constitutional duties. This applies with equal force to Addis Ababa Council members who are governed by similar sets of duties and accountabilities.

**The fourth domestic campaign** is supporting grass root movements, involving both regional PPs and opposition parties who are committed to a peaceful campaign that is focused on a win-win outcome. Our aim of this campaign is to provide the necessary support to grassroots movements, including mobilizing financial support, and echoing their concerns, fears, and demands to the international community.

## ***VII.2. International Investigations and Sanctions Including Drying Up Remittance***

**The first critical campaign is international investigations of crime against humanity not only in Tigray, Amhara and Afar, but also in Oromia and Addis Ababa regions.** We acknowledge the apprehension Ethiopians feel about international investigations as it infringes on the nation’s sovereignty. An international investigation is not a desired choice but a choice of absolute necessity. Unfortunately, the PM and the Oromo-PP are pushing the nation to the brink of total disintegration. There will be no sovereignty if there is no Ethiopia. Our first and foremost task is saving Ethiopia from such a reckless government.

There are compelling reasons why Ethiopians must push for international investigation. On March 20, 2023, the US concluded: “After careful review of the law and the facts” that “members of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, Eritrean Defense Forces, Tigray People’s Liberation Front forces and Amhara forces committed war crimes during the conflict in northern Ethiopia.”

The US pressured the PM to accept the UN mandated international investigation. As a result, [Ethiopia dropped its motion to block the UN investigation](#) but insisted the mandate should not be extended. This is to protect Oromo-PP from investigation and accountability.

The diaspora must work toward expanding the mandate of the international investigation team to include allegations of crime against humanity and ethnic cleansing in the Oromo region and economic and human rights violations in Addis





Ababa. Several international human rights groups have already issued preliminary reports about Tigray. Blocking further international investigations will only deny victims of Oromo-PP and Oromo-Shene in the Oromo region and Addis Ababa.

**The second part of our international campaign** is international sanction. This will have two components. First is to mobilize international pressure against Ethiopian military and police leaders not to carry out any atrocity. Military and police forces need to be reminded in most cases it is military leaders who face genocide charges in international courts. Recent cases in Guatemala, Myanmar, and Serbia provide red flags of warning.

The other aspect of international sanction is economic sanction. We are cognizant that there are economic costs on the poor in the short term, but a targeted sanction is justified by three factors.

- The Prime Minister's submission to allow international investigations shows the power of sanction.
- The economic cost associated with Oromo-PP restrictions on free movements of people, good and services and the unprecedented armed looting by Oromo-PP kleptocrats and Oromo oligarchs is far more than any economic cost associated with international sanctions.
- Any damage that international sanctions cause can be mitigated using targeted and smart sanction. Targeted sanctions will not affect humanitarian aid and programs such as AGOA that helps the poor. Its focus will be on starving the Oromo-PP beast by denying it foreign funds that it is using to fortify an Oromo hegemonic rule.

**The third part of international campaign** is the Diaspora's financial contribution. Diaspora remittance accounts for the lion's share of the nation's foreign exchange. The Diaspora must stop sending remittance through the Banking system. We need to limit remittance strictly to support family members through informal channels. We also need to stop visiting Ethiopia unless it is family emergency.

It is worth mentioning that the US Secretary Antony Blinken's visit that was intended to amend relations with Ethiopia did not materialize because of the PM's lack of concrete commitment to avert human rights violations and establish a system of accountability. The timing is right to create national and international pressure to establish accountability.

**Ethiopia shall prevail!**