



የኢትዮጵያ ሰብአዊ መብቶች ጉባኤ **ETHIOPIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

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EHRCO stands for democracy, the rule of law and the respect of human rights.

Recurring ethnic clashes need lasting solutions **109th Special Report**

May 7, 2008

Introduction

Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which Ethiopia adopted, provides “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” Articles 6(1) and 9(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Ethiopia is a party, affirm these basic rights. Moreover, article 2(1)(2) of the Covenant states the obligation of states to ensure the respect and protection of the rights in their jurisdictions. Furthermore, article 14 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) provides, “Every person has the inviolable and inalienable right to life, the security of person and liberty.”

Nevertheless, these fundamental rights and freedoms are being violated due to various reasons. In this regard, conflicts that are caused between members of different ethnic groups are becoming a major cause of human rights violations in different parts of the country.

In this 109th Special report, the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) presents its findings on human rights violations caused as a result of the ethnic conflict that flared up between members of the Sidama and Guji Oromo ethnic groups living in Wondogenet wereda, Sidama zone of the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Region (SNNPR).

Details

Members of the Sidama, Guji Oromo and other different ethnic groups engaged in different forms of agricultural activities live in 13 kebeles of the Wondogenet wereda. Since 1992, there have been frequent ethnic clashes between members of the Sidama and Guji Oromo ethnic groups. The Guji Oromos had long been petitioning concerned government bodies that Wondogenet wereda be given the

status of a special wereda and become under their administration. On the other hand, the Sidamas were asserting their claims over the wereda.

This dispute has in many occasions led to violent clashes between members of the two ethnic groups causing the death of people and destruction of property. For instance in clashes that erupted on May 16, 2007, four people were killed and several houses, shops and hotels were burnt or looted. In another conflict that flared up on January 12, 2008, schools were burnt and crops were destroyed.

However, as no durable solution was sought to the problem, a minor clash had erupted on March 30, 2008 as members of the Sidama ethnic group threw stones on a vehicle that was carrying members of the Guji Oromo who were coming out of a meeting. Another round of conflict erupted on April 4, 2008 starting around 8:00 A.M., as a result of which, no less than 23 people were killed, and several others were injured. Moreover, a considerable amount of property was damaged and people were displaced from their homes. Following is the details.

Persons killed during the conflict

No	Name of victim	Age	Address	Details
1	Getahun Gemechu	35	Shashana Kebele	Killed with gunshots
2	Mamush Shibru	25	Woshna Siyamo	" "
3	Toke Ture	35	Shashna Kebele	" "
4	Dukamo Chunura	29	Shashna Kebele	" "
5	Shuramu Lemiso	36	Basha Kebele	" "
6	Temtime Desalegn	60	Kele Kebele	Killed with a sword
7	Shure Wahelo	33	" "	Killed with gunshots
8	Asalif Teshome	22	" "	" "
9	Asebe Demisse	26	" "	" "
10	Elias Lelemo	36	" "	" "
11	Mulu Mude	28	Chika Kebele	" "
12	Shuramo Naja	36	" "	" "
13	Yoenkera Edeso	35	" "	" "
14	Kasim Seid	40	Shashana Kebele	Killed with gunshots
15	Beyene Ture	35	" "	" "
16	Elemo Elias	22	Basha Kebele 01	" "
17	Demisse Lewaro	33	Basha Kebele 01	" "

18	Getu Demissie	22	Washa Kebele	" "
19	Meiso Wareko	35	" "	" "
20	Dukama Tumera	30	" "	" "
21	Fiseha Fejo	32	" "	" "
22	Wondiye Dengisa	25	Shashana Kebele	" "
23	Dimo Dimto	37	Chika kebele	" "

Persons injured during the conflict

No.	Name	Address	Details
1	Mengistu Andisa	Chika Kebele	Wounded with bullet
2	Lilamo Kelasa	Washa Kebele	Wounded with bullet on abdomen
3	Dilalo Merasa	Basha Kebele	Shot on leg
4	Gaye Jala	" "	Stabbed with dragger
5	Adiya Anbesse	" "	Wounded with stone
6	Zarge Legesse	" "	" "
7	Workinesh Wayisa	" "	" "
8	Tsehaynesh Kebede	" "	" "

Property damage

No.	Name of owner	Address	Magnitude of the damage
1.	Dr. Samuel Wochefo	Kela	Two million Birr worth hotel burnt, household property looted
2.	Tariku Kio	Basha Kebele	One million Birr worth house burnt, property looted
3.	Yohannes Kiya	Basha Kebele	House burnt, household property looted
4	Tariku Kiya	" "	" "
5	Milkias Kiya	" "	" "
6	Deresu Kiya	" "	" "
7	Desta Kiya	" "	" "
8	Fikre Kiya	" "	" "
9	Workinesh Kiya	" "	" "
10	Kiya Etiso	" "	House burnt, household property looted, plantation destroyed
11	Ageyu Amalo	" "	House burnt
12	Beku Kosha	" "	" "
13	Gemechu Ouga	" "	" "
14	Amalo Geji	" "	" "
15	Wondimu Kima	Chika	" "

16	Lieutenant Wayiso Yue	Kela	“ ”
17	Gabisa	“ ”	Hotel burnt, property looted
18	Sisay Jigo	“ ”	House and shop burnt
19	Daniel Shumalo	“ ”	Recreational center burnt
20	Gemechu Fisha	Basha	Sugarcane plantation destroyed
21	Tafese Kalo	“ ”	House burnt
22	Abera Shibru	Shashna Kebele	“ ”
23	Aman Sisay	“ ”	Sugarcane plantation destroyed
24	Ayamo Eda	“ ”	Property (including livestock) estimated to be one million Birr looted
25	Kasim Seid	“ ”	Two houses demolished
26	Lalita Kedila	Basha	House worth about 5,000 birr burnt
27	Degife Lelemo	“ ”	House worth about 36,000 Birr destroyed

As there has not been a complete stop of the clashes, schools and woreda offices remained closed by the time this report was being compiled. Local and by-elections scheduled for May 13, 2008 did not take place. Tension was still high although the army was deployed to stabilize the area. Many people whose houses were burnt down and those who feared further attacks had fled the area. The victims told EHRCO that no relief assistance was given to them by the time this report was being compiled.

Conclusion

- EHRCO expresses its deep sorrow over the death and injury of people caused as a result of the conflict and reiterates its appeal to the government to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice and also urges it to take its responsibility of protecting the lives and property of citizens seriously.
- EHRCO calls on all concerned particularly the government to immediately provide relief assistance to victims of the conflict and work on their speedy rehabilitation.
- EHRCO would like to call on all concerned to see to it that commensurate compensation is paid to the families of those who were killed during the conflict as well as to those injured and lost their property.
- Furthermore, EHRCO reiterates its appeal to the government to investigate the causes of the recurring conflicts between members of the two ethnic groups and make sure that the conflicts would not happen again by addressing the real causes of the conflicts and by holding all responsible to account.

In addition, EHRCO urges citizens, national and international organizations, representatives of government and international organizations that stand for the respect of human rights and the rule of law, to put pressure on the Ethiopian Government to bring perpetrators of human rights violations to justice, to extend adequate protection to citizens' rights to life, security and property and to foster the culture of resolving disputes only through legal means.

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