



Update on a campaign of massacres against ethnic Amhara civilians by the Oromia Special Force (OSF) in Kiremu town in East Wollega Zone of Ethiopia’s Oromia Region

‘Show us if you know or see neftegnas, we must eliminate them’

Executive Summary

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) has verified that between November 18 and 20, 2022, the Oromia Special Force (OSF) have killed at least 25 ethnic Amhara civilians, injured 5 others, destroyed and looted Amharas’ properties, and caused displacement of thousands in Kiremu town (district) of East Wollega Zone (Oromia Region, Ethiopia).¹ AAA has also received reports of direct involvement of government officials in the attacks, including killings led by the Kiremu town administrator on November 20, 2022.

The tension between OSF and local Amharas mounted since October 16th, 2022 when the

¹The OSF are a unit of special police forces under the Oromia Regional Government structure meant to uphold peace and rule of law. However AAA has continually verified reports of OSF directly killing Amhara civilians, arbitrarily detaining them and colluding with the OLA.

woreda administration started releasing hundreds of ethnic Oromo who were detained because they were proven to be members or supporters/collaborators of the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA). The tension escalated after the OSF's plans to transfer Amharas who were unjustly detained for months under suspicions of organizing Amharas to defend against attacks from the OLA, became known. **These arbitrarily detained Amharas not only face high risk of mistreatment but face the possibility of mass execution, which the OSF has undertaken in the past.**

November 18, 2022 - OSF kills 13 Amhara civilians in a mass execution

On November 18th, 2022, the OSF attempted to follow through by transferring 26 arbitrarily arrested Amharas from Kiremu to Nekemte (administrative center of East Wollega Zone). These Amharas were arbitrarily detained for three months without any charges and accused of organizing Amharas to defend against repeated attacks from the OLA. When the OSF reached a place called Chinina in the same woreda, Amharas voiced opposition to the transfer of the Amhara detainees to Nekemte and they requested that the OSF charge and prosecute the detainees in their woreda. **The OSF refused and opened fire on the Amhara civilians, which resulted in the immediate deaths of 13 Amharas.** All roads to hospitals are closed by OSF and OLA and injured civilians were not able to get medical treatment. At least one of the injured victims, Kere Reta, died from their injuries the next day. While some bodies are still uncollected, many of the victims are buried in Haro St. George's Church's graveyard (Kiremu, East Wollega) and Wodesa Dima St. Teklehaimanot Church's graveyard (in the same woreda). Following the attack, Amhara residents of Kiremu Woreda, estimated to be up to 20,000, have been displaced to Haro town.

November 19, 2022 - OSF kill at least 8 Amhara civilians

The OSF continued its campaign against Amharas on November 19th, 2022 and killed at least eight Amharas. On the morning of November 19th, the OSF summarily executed at least seven Amharas in Kiremu town. The victims were returning from Haro town where they left their family members. The OSF then opened automatic gunfire against them when they entered Kiremu town (between the local telecommunications building and Kiremu High School). Eyewitnesses identified six victims killed in the incident including Tahir Abebe, Hassan Aliyu, Osman Sayed, Muhammad Adem, Muhammed Yimer, and Hassan Mohammed Yimer. In the afternoon, the OSF also executed another civilian by the name of Getachew (last name unknown) by shooting him in broad daylight on the main street of the town.

November 20, 2022 - OSF and Qeerro kill at least 3 Amhara civilians, injure another and destroy businesses and property belonging to Amhara residents

The OSF have intensified their killing of Amharas for the third day (November 20th, 2022) by organizing the local *Qeerro* to kill Amharas alongside them and loot the properties of Amharas.² At the time of writing this report in the afternoon of November 20th, several groups of Qeerro youth, organized by the town's administration and encouraged by and guarded by the OSF went door-to-door, killing ethnic Amharas including looting and destroying their property. An eyewitness, hiding somewhere in the town, said:

“Many people are roaming the town. There is Special police (OSF), ordinary police and Oromo militias (state militias) breaking into houses and shops.

²Qeerro describe radical Oromo youth which often organize in violent politically motivated attacks and have operated independently and at times collaboratively with OLA, Oromo militias and OSF to perpetrate attacks against Amharas.

They are chanting ‘any Oromo! Stand up, go out and join us’. They looted everything they had. I am hearing gunshots. Many people I know have been killed. Businesses including mine have been looted.”

Another eyewitness described the attack by the OSF being led by the Kiremu town administrator, Shimelis Yadetta. Their account was as follows:

“I saw them. It is Kiremu town administrator, Shimelis Yadetta, in coordination with the Special Police (OSF), leading the operation. I saw him showing Amharas’ business to be looted.”

Another source which spoke to AAA’s investigators described seeing dead bodies scattered throughout the streets and the OSF actively seeking out Amhara civilians using pro-genocidal and dehumanizing language which clearly demonstrates intent to carry out identity-based killings. The source said,

“I saw dead bodies all across the town’s streets. But I could not name them all. I heard them (OSF soldiers) saying ‘show us if you know or see neftegnas, we must eliminate them’.”

AAA’s sources were able to name only four victims (three are dead and one injured) in the November 20th incident but they said their expectation of the number killed and injured is much greater. The three killed in this incident are Mohammed Kemal, Moges Mekonnen, Dessalegn Dawud and Ahmed Ali while Ahmed Kumie and Kassa Kebede were injured.

AAA’s investigators have been able to identify names of 30 victims of the attack by the OSF in Kiremu town between November 18 and 20, 2022. Of these 30 names, 25 are names of victims killed in the attack and 5 are names of injured victims.

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Outcome of the attack
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1	Mamar Alemnew	M		Killed
2	Shiret Fenta	M		Killed
3	Nibret Amogne	M		Killed
4	Abay Belay	M		Killed
5	Kere Ereta	M		Killed
6	Aner (last name unkown)	M		Killed
7	Adem (last name unknown)	M		Killed
8	Animut (last name unkown)	M		Killed
9	Abebe (last name unkown)	M		Killed
10	Demissie (last name unkown)	M		Killed
11	Molla (last name unkown)	M		Killed
12	Mohammed (last name unkown)	M		Killed
13	Tahir Abebe	M	42	Killed
14	Hassan Aliyu	M	37	Killed
15	Osman Sayed	M	35	Killed
16	Mohammed Adem	M	38	Killed
17	Hassan Mohammed Yimer	M	46	Killed
18	Mohammed Yimer	M	21	Killed
19	Getachew (last name unknown)	M	42	Killed
20	Mohammed Kemal	M	35	Killed
21	Moges Mekonnen	M		Killed
22	Ahmed Ali	M		Killed
23	Amare Alemnew	M		Killed
24	Osman Ali	M		Killed
25	Dessalegn Dawud	M		Killed
26	Ahmed Kumie	M		Injured
27	Amare Tadesse	M		Injured

28	Mulat Birhan	M	Injured
29	Tofik Belaynew	M	Injured
30	Kassa Kebede	M	Injured

Below is a partial list of business owners whose businesses were looted in Kiremu town on November 20, 2022.

No.	Business owner name	Type of property
1	Ahmed Ali	Electronics Store
2	Ansuar Ali	Electronics Store
3	Mohammed Ali	Electronics Store
4	Hassan Mohammed	Electronics Store
5	Abush Workie	Electronics Store
6	Mohammed Ahmed	Electronics Store
7	Yenus Mohammed	Electronics Store
8	Hamid Ahmed	Electronics Store
9	Mohammed Workie	Electronics Store
10	Abdurahman (last name unknown)	Clothing Store
11	Sayed Aynaddis	Clothing Store
12	Mustefa Mohammed	Clothing Store
13	Taju Ahmmed	Clothing Store
14	Suleima Yassin	Clothing Store
15	Sayed Omer	Clothing Store
16	Ahmed Awol	Clothing Store
17	Dawud Ahmed	Clothing Store
18	Ahmed Ali	Clothing Store

About Amhara Association of America (AAA)

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) is a non-profit civic organization located in Charlotte, North Carolina that investigates and documents human rights atrocities and repression against Amharas in Ethiopia. AAA seeks to inform U.S. policymakers, international human rights organizations, media, and all Ethiopian stakeholders to pressure Ethiopian leaders to change laws, policies, and practices in Ethiopia so perpetrators are held accountable and victims receive justice. AAA also collaborates with Amhara organizations in the U.S., supports independent Amhara organizations in Ethiopia, and provides humanitarian aid for Amharas impacted due to targeted ethnic attacks. AAA's funding comes directly from members and supporters; the organization is not affiliated with any Ethiopian or American political or governmental entities.

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