

Press Statement from Amhara Fano in Wollo

August 16, 2024
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A call for protection of humanitarian workers in Amhara Region

We, the Amhara Fano in Wollo, express our dismay upon hearing of the recent killing of humanitarian worker Ato Yared Melese in north eastern Amhara Region. On behalf of Amhara Fano in Wollo and our counterparts in other parts of the region we extend our heartfelt condolences to family members and friends of the late Ato Yared and call on all actors to ensure those responsible for this heinous act are brought to justice.

In a statement issued by UNOCHA Ethiopia on August 14th, it was reported that a humanitarian worker identified as Ato Yared Melese was abducted for ransom and subsequently killed by an unidentified armed group operating in Dawunt Woreda of North Wollo Zone in Amhara Region. On this occasion, we would like to clarify that our forces were not responsible for any attacks against civilians nor were they engaged in any operation in this area as this area was under control of regime forces. Furthermore, we condemn any and all attacks on civilians and remain committed to the protection of humanitarian workers as we have reiterated in previous statements.

Over the past 15 months, the armed forces of the Abiy Ahmed led Oromo Prosperity Party regime have taken every opportunity to target unarmed civilians in their genocidal war on the Amhara people. Throughout this period our disciplined army has operated with strict adherence to international humanitarian law. In contrast, the Abiy regime's pattern of atrocities and war crimes has been documented by various domestic and international organizations. For example, the OHCHR in its 2023 human rights update, attributed the majority of 740 recorded civilian deaths in Amhara Region to regime forces. Moreover, crimes of abduction for ransom and hostage taking have become widespread, often directly or indirectly implicating regime forces and officials. For example, regarding incidents in Central and North Gonder, our counterparts, the Amhara Fano in Gonder, previously issued statements which addressed impersonation of Fano by regime forces, and deliberate targeting of refugee shelters which were under regime jurisdiction. Therefore, such criminality can be said to be the "modus operandi" of the criminal regime.

In closing, we, the Amhara Fano in Wollo, condemn all acts of violence against humanitarian workers and civilians at large, and call for violators to face justice. With this, we would like to reiterate our steadfast commitment to working with international partners in independent and impartial investigations and delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to those in need.

Abebe Fentaw
Head of Public Relations, Amhara Fano in Wollo