



**Amhara
Association of
America (AAA)**

PRESS STATEMENT

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Ongoing identity based killings and arrests in Addis Ababa city and various towns and cities in Amhara Region of Ethiopia

The Amhara Association of America (AAA) is gravely concerned over reports of a new wave of widespread attacks and abuses targeting civilians in various cities across Amhara Region, in Addis-Ababa city and surrounding areas in connection with the observance of religious traditions by followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC).

According to information received by AAA, the Abiy Ahmed led Oromo Prosperity Party (OPP) regime's armed forces have carried out extrajudicial killings, physical assaults, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and destruction of private property in connection with observance of the Timket (Epiphany) holiday by followers of the EOTC. This pattern of abuses has been recorded in the federal capital of Addis Ababa city and in various towns and cities across Amhara Region including the regional capital of Bahir-Dar, Gonder, Woldia, Debre-Markos, Bure and Dembecha among others. In many cases, youth were rounded up en masse and taken to remote (undisclosed) detention facilities under accusation of singing songs or chants praising prominent Fano leaders.

Among the most horrific and deadly incidents was one in Amchiwiha Kebele (located near Delgi town) of Alefa Woreda in Central Gonder Zone (western Amhara Region) when on January 20th, 2025, OPP regime forces massacred at least 36 civilians using indiscriminate heavy artillery fire.

AAA strongly condemns these horrific attacks and abuses against civilians observing a religious holiday. However, these abuses are just the latest in a broader pattern of impunity by the OPP regime. To put this into perspective between August 4th, 2023 and December 30th, 2024, AAA has recorded 5,052 civilian casualties including 3,935 people killed and 1,117 injured by OPP regime forces. These figures represent a small fraction of the true extent of the casualties.

In recent years, the OPP regime has perpetrated targeted abuses and persecutions against followers of the EOTC in various contexts including in early 2023 when the regime sponsored a full-fledged assault on worshippers across the country. This is in addition to years of targeted massacres in various parts of Oromia Region by the Oromo Liberation Army. In areas under occupation by Tigray Region forces such as Raya-Alamata, Korem and Telemt residents have also been unable to worship freely, often facing lethal and repressive measures by Tigray regional and federal forces.

AAA is concerned over longstanding patterns of identity-based atrocities and persecution especially against ethnic Amharas and hindering of religious freedoms in Ethiopia under the OPP regime. If left unresolved this pattern of conduct will continue to hinder peace, freedom and stability affecting millions of people in the wider region.

To uphold basic human rights and promote lasting peace, justice and accountability AAA continues to call for the immediate and unconditional release of all persons arbitrarily detained for their identity and/or political views and for a cessation of hostilities against the embattled Amhara populace across Ethiopia. AAA also calls on the international community to take immediate action against the OPP regime for the ongoing genocide perpetrated against the Amhara people.