



**Declaration of war will not lead to security but rather spark more chaos in the Horn
Statement by the Oromo Liberation Front**

The Ethiopian parliament on its session of November 30, 2006 ratified a declaration of war on Somalia and Eritrea. Most surprisingly it took the unprecedented step of declaring war on the Oromo Liberation Front as well in the face of fierce resistance from the loyal opposition on the grounds that this would be an extraordinary act of criminalizing political demand. This reckless decision would undoubtedly lead to chaos in the Horn of Africa. The OLF would like to let it be known to all concerned that the Ethiopian regime and it alone, bears full responsibility for this debacle that has no historical precedent.

The EPRDF thrives on violence and cannot exist without war. Its belligerence emanates from a deep sense of internal insecurity born of its minority status and total rejection by the populace. That is why it has been terrorizing the peoples in Ethiopia to vainly gain their submission. After massacring innocent civilians in Oromia without any offense and filming the gruesome crime, the Ethiopian regime tried to blame it on the OLF. It mowed down civilians in Sidama, Shakka-Mejengir and Gambella with impunity. It shot and killed unarmed peaceful demonstrators in the capital in broad daylight and blamed it on the opposition. It shamelessly went on to sabotage the investigation of the incident to prevent the truth from coming out and avoid its culpability.

Moreover, there is no neighboring country that escaped TPLF/EPRDF's belligerence. In an undeclared war on the Sudan from 1995 to 1997 the Ethiopian regime invaded and occupied the key border towns of Kurmuk and Gizan. It repeatedly deployed its troops against Kenya causing extensive killing, abduction and looting and in the process plunging the northern region of Kenya into pandemonium. From 1998-2000 the regime also went into a senseless war with Eritrea in which over 120,000 conscripts were sacrificed.

Chaos has reigned in Somalia during the last 16 years. The international community and neighboring countries have made several attempts to resolve the impasse in Somalia and end the unmitigated suffering of the people. Kenya, Yemen, Egypt and Djibouti have at various times made concerted efforts to deal with the situation in Somalia. None of these efforts succeeded in turning the condition around. As these repeated failures testify the search for the resolution of the intractable Somali problem from outside and by outsiders has not and cannot bear fruit. In fact, the outcome of all past foreign interventions, even humanitarian ones, ended up exacerbating rather than helping the situation. Such sobering experience should have cautioned the TPLF/EPRDF and its benefactors from undertaking a new futile military campaign in Somalia.

Before the limbs broken by the previous Ethio-Eritrean war have healed, before the blood that flowed like a mighty river have dried up, before the villages ruined by the mayhem revived back into their

vibrant life, and before families distressed by the loss of their loved ones have been able to overcome their grief, it is regrettable for the Ethiopian regime to declare another war on Eritrea. The Ethiopian regime is once again spoiling to spill more blood while dodging acceptance of the international ruling that should have put an end to the nagging conflict. As a result our youth, our future and hope, are going to perish, once again used as cannon fodder and mine sweepers. Thus this is an action that need not only be condemned but also valiantly and fiercely resisted. This is not a sane action but rather a crazy escapade of a deranged regime desperate to cling on to power by deflecting attention from its mounting troubles at home.

No country takes the unprecedented and outrageous step of having its parliament declare war to deal with, by military means, a political problem between an aggrieved population and a government, which purports to rule it. The Ethiopian Parliament endorsed the regime's declaration of war on the OLF while fully cognizant that OLF is engaged in struggling against a highly repressive and dictatorial system. OLF believes the measure taken by the parliament is a crime unforgivable in history. Those in the parliament who opposed this hideous act and voted against it have commendably discharged their historical responsibility.

The OLF began resisting the repressive policies of successive Ethiopian regimes long before the current forces in Somalia, on which the regime declared war, even came to the scene. The cause of the Oromo struggle is noble. Ending the repression, subjugation, and marginalization of the Oromo and charting a future founded on freedom and democracy is its cherished goal. It is anchored on respect for the right to self-determination, a right recognized by international law. The declaration of war on OLF, while fully aware that it is engaged in a political struggle to attain this just right, is thus an abominable and unforgivable crime against the Oromo people.

Dear compatriots of the indomitable Oromo nation!!

The Ethiopian parliament that ought to have stood for the respect of your rights so flagrantly being violated has instead openly declared war on you. This would open the doors to hell and is an ominous menace to you and all other peoples. Hence we urge you to rally from corner to corner to frustrate this war of aggression--- a war financed with your resources and staffed with your dear children. It is therefore doubly incumbent on you to defeat this unjust war to spare yourself and others the prospect of seeing thousands of lives and property devastated, the dream of the new generation for a more peaceful and dignified life smothered. This is not a case where you can afford to stay on the sidelines. It is not a danger that you can dismiss as nothing of your concern. We have to all hold hands with all the peoples in Ethiopia and the region to overcome an aggression imposed on all of us by a bloodthirsty regime that worships war and abhors peace.

Finally, we appeal to the international community, governments, international organizations and all freedom and peace loving people of the world to help stop in the bud this ominous specter of devastation before it engulfs the region. We want to be on record to state that unless the dogs of war in Ethiopia are halted, the future of this already troubled region might go up in flames.

Victory to the Oromo People!!

Oromo Liberation Front

November 30, 2006