

ADDA BILISUMMAA OROMOO

OROMO LIBERATION FRONT



جبهة تحرير اورومو

Statement of the Executive Committee of the OLF

December 2, 2007

The Executive Committee of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) held its regular session from November 25- December 1, 2007. In its deliberations the Committee noted that:

1. The political crisis in Ethiopia is deepening. In a futile bid to stamp out the Oromo Liberation Army and the Ogaden National Liberation Army, the regime in Addis is conducting a brutal crackdown in Oromia and Ogaden. The indiscriminate targeting of the civilian populations is causing a humanitarian crisis at par with *Darfur*. Political repression is also rampant through the width and length of the country. To make matters worse by severely restricting political freedom, even to the opposition in the parliament, the regime has emasculated the political process and made open resistance the only route left to seek redress for political grievances.
2. The specter of war, chaos and humanitarian disasters looms over the Horn of Africa. When the Ethiopian regime made an adventure into Somalia last year against clear warnings, it boasted that it would accomplish its stated goals and withdraw within weeks. A year later it finds itself in a quagmire. To cope with a determined resistance, the Ethiopian army is taking its wrath on the civilian population, as it has been doing in Oromia and Ogaden, unleashing a horrendous humanitarian crisis. The saber-rattling by the Ethiopian Prime Minister against domestic and foreign enemies in a recent speech to the Parliament does not bode well for a peaceful resolution. Now that the Border Commission has expired without completing its mission, the resumption of another disastrous war appears an ominous possibility.

Based on these observations the Executive Committee makes the following calls:

To the Oromo People

Despite the extreme brutality visited upon you by the incumbent regime for 17 long years, you have persevered in your noble struggle for freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Through your readiness to pay whatever sacrifices the struggle required of you, you have demonstrated your yearning for freedom is inextinguishable. Despite its vain rhetoric, your enemy is weak, its grip on power fleeting. We call on you to remain steadfast and intensify the struggle. Your worthy cause shall prevail in the end.

To the peoples of Ethiopia

Upon coming to power 17 long years ago the EPRDF promised you peace, democracy and development. Today war is raging in Oromia and Ogaden. Ethiopian troops are

dying in Somalia. Soon thousands may perish in another senseless war in the North. The constitution and the rule of law are openly and brazenly violated. Political freedom is severely restricted. Poverty is becoming more and more grinding rather than abating. Despite the lofty rhetoric by the regime and its apologists, the facts suggest that after 17 long years none of the promises are kept and none are likely to be ever delivered. How long can you wait in vain? We believe you have waited too long and call on you to join hands and intensify your struggle to shake off tyranny and establish a new era of peace, democracy and prosperity. We also urge the opposition and resistance forces to close ranks and rally under the umbrella of the Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (AFD).

To the Ethiopian Government

The Ethiopian military is busy fighting in Oromia and Ogaden. It has bogged down in Somalia. Another theatre of war may soon open up on the northern border. A poor and divided country can ill afford to sustain such a costly and endless war at home and abroad. It is time for a thorough rethink of policy. The way out is a just political solution, first at home. We thus call on you to heed the call for dialogue to resolve the impasse.

To the International Community

The political crisis in Ethiopia has reached a critical stage. The regional situation is pregnant with multiple dangers. The prospects of further destabilization are alarmingly real. A humanitarian crisis of a magnitude that dwarfs *Darfur* could be just on the corner. We thus call on the international community to grasp the gravity of the situation and set in motion a process that can bring about a comprehensive regional political solution.

Victory to the Oromo people!