

Ethiopia's Anywaa Say Regular Army, Militias Commit Massacre

Press Release (UK)

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Anywaa Survival Organisation wishes to highlight the gravity of fragile relationship between Anywaa indigenous peoples and the Ethiopian National Defense Forces along side Ethiopian highlanders' militia and further insecurity threats in the region. In the past few years the Anywaa community has experienced unabated crime against humanity; systematic killings, torture, arbitrary detention, mass rapes and disappearances in their own home land.

Anywaa survival would like to draw the attention of international community, organizations, NGOs and individuals to further simmering violent conflict and plot to kill that threatens the survival of Anywaa indigenous populations. It is reported that the highlander's militias and the Ethiopian National Defense forces are further plotting similar December 13 to massacre Anywaa populations in the country. Traders and a group of highlanders in regional education Bureau with senior military officials in the region are among the top plotters of this hate against their host community.

According to our sources, the step by step preparation of genocide is underway; firstly, by raising money to buy authorities in Addis Ababa to authorize large scale massacre worse than December 2003. The funding programme is already completed. The second step is to increase National Defense Forces in the region to search Anywaa households in Gambela town for any armaments. 1200 additional soldiers have arrived in Gambela town on 29 June 2006. The search into Anywaa households is believed to kick off soon. Its purpose is to establish Anywaa vulnerability to complete their possible extinction in their ancestral land, Gambela and the surroundings.

The recent ambush on public transport by unidentified group in June this year has further ignited violent conflict and continued reprisals on Anywaa villages. At least 30 passengers including Anywaa were reported dead with many more wounded. The army, since the ambush, has stepped up its raids on Anywaa villages; shooting farmers at random on their farms, arbitrarily detaining young men in unknown locations, restricting freedom of movement of Anywaa civilians and further threatening their livelihood.

It is to be recalled that the Ethiopian army used similar pretext of an ambush on the vehicle belonging to Administration for Refugees and

Returnees Affairs (ARRA), an implementing partner to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees by unidentified group to murder, rape, and burn to the ground, ransacked and looted Anywaa neighborhoods in Gambela town and villages in 2003.

Anywaa Survival Organisation has received numerous reports of arbitrary detention, rapes, murder and low level professional killings in the hospital and clinics across the region comparable to pre-December 2003. The Ethiopian National Defense Forces murdered a farmer on his farm in June this year and threatened the entire Opuomoro village of further consequences of disclosure of their involvement. The army further attacked Civilians at Dumbeng village (Abwobo district) and farmers at Gog village killing two farmers in the former. Farmers at Gog sustained serious injuries, beating and torture and made to sign an undertaking with further consequences.

The army further murders two Anywaa men; Omot Desta and Omot Onyongo at Pinyudo football ground and Pochalla-Olura village respectively in public. They dragged the victims' bodies to nearby bushes. Farmers found the latter body consumed by wild animals in a bush near Pochalla-Olura. On similar development two Anywaa men picked along the road near Jawee village, by a vehicle (Plate no. GM00074) escorting Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs to Gambela town, disappeared and their whereabouts are unknown.

In similar reports Oduong (Health Bureau staff member), and a 9 years old girl were pronounced dead after visiting Gambela hospital with minor discomfort. Oman Okidi, agriculture expert also reported dead in his home after he visited Lare Clinic in Jokau district. Their deaths were associated with injection they received at the hospital and clinic. These professional killings have left many to suffer at home without visiting hospital or Clinics.

Anywaa Survival Organisation-ASO urges the international community, the UN and European Union to amicably find just solution to the endangered Anywaa community to save them from extinction.

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