



AFAR FORUM

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The Afar Forum strongly denounces the massacre committed by Issa-Somali against innocent Afars in Mille and Adaytu villages. The incident took place between June 10 – 12 in a well coordinated attack. Over 30 Afars were killed and countless were wounded. This incident started when Issas thugs cold bloodily killed unarmed two-health workers who were engaged in vaccination work around Mille. The second attack by these well armed Issas who were equipped with grenade and heavy guns killed over 30 innocent Afars in Adaytu. Moreover, here is a report confirming that the Ethiopian Federal Government soldiers attacked and killed more Afars when they came to collect their dead. This act of adding salt on a wound by the Ethiopian Federal Army is a blatant disregard for human rights. The army supposed to protect the victims and not take side to protect the Issa clan.

The TPLF government for the last eighteen years has sided and protected the Issas who are in expansionist activities fearing the Issa lead Djibouti Government could create problem to the Ethiopian Government to use the Djibouti port. The Afars since the TPLF controlled Ethiopia have appealed on numerous occasions to the one and the only ruler Meles Zenawi about the Killings committed by Issas and a systematic expansion in the heartland of Ethiopian Afar region. All their appeal fell on deaf ear. There have been no constructive attempts made by the TPLF Government to resolve the daily killing of innocent Afars by Issas on the road Djibouti to Addis Ababa. No Afar travels through Gadmaytu, Adaytu, Undafoo villages and more where Issas use as a base to attack and kill Afars. These bases are used as main contraband distribution center. The sales form the contraband goods are used to bribe corrupt army officers and to purchase weapons. If the Issas as some pundit believe are settling in the heartland of Afar to search for water and grazing, then the question should be asked why are they equipped with so many heavy weaponry? The continued aggression and mass killings of Afars is a clear indication that neither the Federal Government of Ethiopia nor the Afar Regional Government is willing to protect the killing of innocent Afars by well funded and well equipped Issa-Somalis. Afars are denied the right to protect themselves.

The Issa-Afar conflict in Ethiopia has taken a new dimension and has created immense suffering to the Afars after the independence of Somalia proper and Djibouti. This phenomenon is also true for Djibouti Afars. There is systematic and deliberate attempt in both countries to change the demographic of the Afar territories in Djibouti and Ethiopia through force by settling Issas and other Somalis in historically Afar land. These illegal settlements limit the movement of Afar Pastoralists within their traditional grazing area. The massive sugar cane plantation in progress without the approval of elected Afar regional representatives is another TPLF design to confiscate vast fertile Afar land thus displacing thousand of Afars from their ancestral birth place. While the Afars welcome any development that will benefit them, the Afar Forum strongly opposes the sugar cane plantation, which is not design to benefit the Afars and will displace thousands to more hostile terrain.

Ethio-Eritrea boarder conflict has displaced many Afars and resulted in loss of many lives and properties. The continuation of this conflict has brought unimaginable suffering to the Afars. There are Afar refugees in an open desert with no help from aid organizations or the United Nations. The recent border clashes between Eritrea and Djibouti have displaced and took many Afar lives. In all these conflicts it appears that the Afars are the victims of these irresponsible and repressive governments.

We call on the international community to seriously examine the crimes committed against innocent Afar pastoralist society and save them from states sponsored extermination. We appeal to the United Nations, EU, AU, Arab League and Human Right Organizations to send a fact-finding delegation and investigate the conditions the Afars are subjected to.

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