

July 16, 2007

The Honorable Ms. Kinnock Glenys  
Member of European Parliament  
The Co-Presidents of ACP-EU Joint  
Parliamentary Assembly  
60 Rue Wiertz /Wiertzstraat 60, B-1047 Brussels,  
Belgium.

**Ref: Resolution of the European Parliament on Situation in Ethiopia**

I am pleased to see the Resolution passed on June 7, 2007 at Strasbourg, France, by the European Parliament pertaining to the current political situation in Ethiopia. On behalf of the leadership of the Oromo Studies Association (OSA), I do commend the European Parliament for the fair and balanced analysis of the political situation and current events in Ethiopia and for passing a resolution that addresses that situation. The Resolution is particularly timely as it comes when the country is gripped by political tensions and crisis entirely of the making of the authorities. The chasm of trust separating the government from the Ethiopian people is large and as deep as ever.

However, I regret to say that the European Parliament has failed to pass a comprehensive Resolution that also takes the suffering and plight of the largest national ethnic group, the Oromo people, into account. We, the OSA leadership, are distressed and disheartened at the silence of the European Parliament to consider the gravity of the political situation and deteriorating human rights conditions that is taking place in the Oromo heartland and its failure to call on the government to cease those violations forthwith. Successive Ethiopian governments have waged wars of conquest, occupation and ethnic cleansing against defenseless Oromo people since time immemorial. The current regime and ruling party are no exceptions. They have unleashed their army on innocent and unsuspecting Oromos, killed and maimed tens and thousands of them, uprooted them from their ancestral homes and lands, and turned hundreds of thousands of them into refugees and exile. Thousands of Oromo nationalists are tortured and currently languishing in the EPRDF jails, often under appalling and inhuman conditions. Needless to say, the Oromo people feel they are virtually under military siege and under relentless and vengeful attacks by the military that terrorize them on daily basis.

Under these circumstances, one would have thought that the European Parliament will come out with a resounding condemnation of the crude treatment meted out to the Oromo people and their incarcerated leaders. We in OSA leadership are puzzled and saddened at the total lack of concern and benign neglect shown for the Oromo people by the European Parliament. Nowhere does the resolution cite, even in passing, the plight of the Oromo people and address their legitimate struggle for peace, freedom, and democracy. It is silent on the Oromo people's aspiration for cultural autonomy, national dignity, self-determination and justice. The Oromo people constitute the single largest national group in the Ethiopia (more than 40%) and, indeed, in the whole of the Horn of Africa. We are saddened that the European Parliament fails to address the deprivation of the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of this national majority at the hands of a minority group and government.

There can not be peace and sustainable development in Ethiopia without the active involvement and wholehearted participation of the Oromo people in Ethiopia's governance and development. Indeed, the resolution of the Oromo questions is the precondition for resolving Ethiopia's ethnic, political and economic divides and problems. Any attempt to try to resolve the country's myriad problems by marginalizing its majority from the political process will end in abysmal failure. The OSA leadership and I applaud the European Parliament for passing this timely Resolution and, once again, commend it for the principled, consistent and courageous positions it has adopted on all issues addressed in the resolution. I plead with you to go one step further and make the plight of the long suffering and struggling Oromo people the focus of your parliamentary inquiry and deliberation, and join us as partners in the historic march of the Oromo people for freedom, justice, democracy, peace and progress.

I hope you will accord this letter your most favorable considerations.

Sincerely,

*Gobena Huluka*

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