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Oromo Studies Association

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Message From the President

Dear Colleagues:

The 2011 OSA mid year conference is successfully completed. This year the theme of the OSA Mid Year conference was: Re-examining Theories and Practices of Human Capacity Building in Oromia and the Greater Horn of Africa and Challenging Misguided Practices. On the conference our scholars took a critical look at the theories and practices surrounding capacity building and identified the gaps between theories and practices. In the conference we learned not only how the Ethiopian government social policies incapacitate the Oromo people but also what the Oromo people should do to build their capacity.

The presenters of the conference highlighted that in order to control and manipulate the Oromo people, the policy of the Ethiopian government remains driven to incapacitate the Oromo people. In his keynote speech, Prof. Ezekiel Gebissa highlighted that if the Oromo people are intended to develop their capacity, they need to frame the development agenda on their culture and worldview. Prof. Mohammed H. Ali elaborated the importance of land in the life of Oromo people. The Ethiopian landownership policy hinders the capacity building of Oromo people. Rev. Dr. Horwood Schaffer brought into light the importance of five tasks in capacity development: vision, ownership, empowerment, accountability and the importance cultural wisdom.

Dr. Haile Hirpha highlighted that education can empower and prepare the students to solve the social problems of society and facilitate social changes or des-empower and used to control, manipulate and legitimize colonial agenda. Dr. Hirpha drew the attention of the audience to the case of education system of the apartheid government of South Africa and compared it with the Ethiopian school system in Oromia. He pointed out the need to bring reform in education system in Oromia. Obbo Tesfaye Dheresa highlighted the importance of media in educating the society and raising awareness on emerging risks and opportunities. He convincingly argued that the absence of free press, denied the Oromo people the opportunity to build their capacity.

Dr. Begna Dugassa looked at the relationships between collective rights, capacity building and public health. He argues that the concept of collective rights- the right of people to self-determination constitutes the social, economic, political and cultural rights. He also highlighted that a society can develop their capacity through enhancing their- social, economic, political and cultural capacity. Public health condition of a society is also determined by the social, economic, political conditions of the society and the culture in which they live. Therefore, he argued that as it was the case for many people under the colonial rule, if the collective rights of the Oromo people are not respected, they cannot develop their capacity and if the two conditions are not mate the public health conditions of Oromia will either deteriorate, remain stagnant or progress very slowly. Dr. Dugassa argues that the violation of economic rights leads to poverty. In its turn, poverty contributes to

several micronutrient deficiencies. **Micronutrient deficiencies such as iodine and iron as well as energy-protein deficiency affect the mental capacity of children and their productivity in adulthood.**

Addee Darartu Abbajobir highlighted the importance of the participation of women in the capacity building of the Oromo people. She highlighted that the Oromo women at least constitute fifty percentage of the Oromo people, if the Oromo women are not fully participate in the social, economic, political and cultural affairs of Oromia, the Oromo people's capacity cannot developed to its potential. In this newsletter I included the abstract of the papers presented. I hope the presenters will make available the final version of their paper as soon as possible.

The issues that the OSA has involved in the past quarter includes the case of Oromo refugees who are dispersed throughout the world and the case of Oromo students who were gun down and imprisoned by the Ethiopian security forces and the imprisonment of Oromo men and women. As it has been happening for over a century in Oromia and in Diaspora the safety and security of the Oromo students, businessmen and women and intelligentsia are attacked at different levels. As Michael Dodson (1996) said, ``self-determination is the river in which all other rights swim`` from the experience of the Oromo refugees in several parts of the world it is clear that Oromo individuals can achieve security if the Oromo people guarantee themselves collective rights. On the behalf OSA I wrote a letter to the United Nations High Commission for refugee (UNHCR) and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent. In the letter I appealed to these international organizations to provide safety and security to Oromo refugees. Now some of the Oromo refugees are taken to Tunisia, Egypt and Italy. I also wrote a letter to the President of United States of America – Barack Obama and asked him to exert pressure to the Prime Minster of Ethiopia to stop the widespread killings and imprisonments against the Oromo students, Oromo men and women of all ages and other people.

In the past four weeks I got many calls from Oromo refugees from countries like Libya, Tunisia and Egypt. Although they left me the number on which I can rich them, I found out that it is very difficult to reach them. Such experience gave me a sense of helplessness. At the same time, when I hear a story that a simple letter I wrote on behalf of OSA members to UNHCR and Red Cross and Red Crescent helped some of the Oromo refugees I feel hopeful. I believe, as a scholarly organization, as the OSA research and learn more about the social reality of the Oromo people, it has obligation to let others know about it.

Now let me turn to the future direction. As you know this year the OSA is getting ready to celebrate the 25th anniversary (3 gadaa grades). The information I have from Minnesota suggests that the week on which we conduct our conference the city might name it as ``the Oromo Week``. For the Annual OSA conference we have the theme that is dear to the Oromo people. The theme is: Building Transformative and Dynamic Leadership and Facilitating the Empowerment of People in Oromia and the Greater Horn of Africa. This is a

very important topic. Instead of simply giving our own opinions we need to research and produce knowledge in this area.

In addition, in our 25th anniversary we need to examine our success and failure. We need to learn from our weakness and build on our strengths. Given that OSA is a scholarly organization our productivity is measured on the participation of our members on scholarly conferences, the quality of papers they present and publish. To measure our success and failure we are planning to collect data and analyze them. To know where we are, we need to revisit what the Oromo scholarship looks like 25 years ago. For this we are expecting that all the OSA members to send us the list of their papers, chapters books and books they have published in the last 25 years. Although we would like to have all the lists of your publications, we want you to separately list the papers and books where you have discussed the issues relevant to the Oromo people. I believe this create better opportunity to know the research interest of our colleagues.

In our 25th anniversary we are also planning to recognize scholars who have contributed the most in Oromo Studies. For this we want to ask you nominate three persons in different categories and one institution. The first category is an academic award - individual who have played greatest role in researching, publishing and presenting on the Oromo issues. The second category is a leadership award – individual who have contributed greet role in leading OSA or coaching and providing advises to the OSA leadership. The third category is recognizing the outstanding works of the incoming young OSA members. Using this opportunity I would like to ask to send your nomination to Begna Dugassa, Ph.D at b.dugassa@utoronto.ca and Hamza Abdurezak, Ph.D at abdurez@fas.harvard.edu.

On the annual OSA conference we are planning to organize a display. We are planning to display the works of our scholars and in doing that we will introduce your works to our participants and members. For the display we need at least a copy from each of your papers and books. If you are planning to attend the annual OSA conference bring them with you, if not, send them to OSA`s mailing address.

Knowledge is power and it is used as a tool of domination and exploitation or liberation and empowerment. Understanding this let me end this letter with a quote from UNESCO constitution, which states, “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”. In same analogy if the Oromo people are intended to achieve collective security, safety and liberty they need to think to further develop and diversify their scholarly institutions. May Waaqa help us to achieve this noble goal.

Thank you, Galatooma

Begna F. Dugassa
OSA President

The OSA 2011 Mid Year Conference Program



Keynote speaker: Prof. Ezekiel Gebissa
Kettering University, U.S.A

Conference Theme:

Re-examining Theories and Practices of Human Capacity Building in Oromia and the Greater Horn of Africa and Challenging Misguided Practices

Date: April 2-3, 2011

Institute of African Studies

Carleton University
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON
K1S 5B6
Canada

Auditorium: Azrieli Theatre 301

Message from the President

Dear the OSA 2011 Mid Year Conference Participants,

To know where we are going it is important to know and remember where we come from. We clearly know that for over five centuries, European scholars have studied the Oromo people, and interpreted their data from their own perspectives. These scholars were influenced by European racial (biological and cultural) theories and they produced knowledge accordingly. Not only that, the knowledge they produced from such scholarship they taught the Abyssinian kings. These theories inspired the Abyssinian kings to claim divine power and entitlement to colonize and subjugate non-Abyssinian peoples in the Horn of Africa. Until recently, in Ethiopia, school children were taught that the ancient Ethiopian territory stretched from south of Egypt to the present state of South Africa. Such a claim led to a theory that non-Abyssinians who are settled in the given geographical region are either categorized as a new settlers or colonial subjects. It was such theories that guided the European empire builders to provide military hardware and military personnel to the Abyssinian king Menelik to conquer Oromia and other regions.

For example, the Euro-Abyssinian theories about the Oromo people produced two major racist theories. The first theory suggests that the Oromo people are migrants. The second theory suggests that they actually came out of ``water or sea``. Both theories deny the Oromo people endogenous status in the Horn of Africa. Of course these theories are not based on scientific evidence but on racist assumptions and myths. These theories were instrumental in the formation of the Ethiopian empire, and are the major causes of the social instability, poverty and diseases in the Horn of Africa. It is such racist theory that conditioned the Oromo people, who are the single largest ethno-national group in the Ethiopian empire and the Horn of Africa, to be ruled by the Tigrayan minority group.

The Oromo Studies Association (OSA) was formed to challenge Euro-Abyssinian racist discourses about the Oromo people and construct knowledge from the Oromo perspective. For the Mid year conference, OSA has chosen the theme of the conference to be: Re-examining Theories and Practices of Human Capacity Building in Oromia and the Greater Horn of Africa and Challenging Misguided Practices. OSA has decided to re-examine the theories and practices of capacity building. In this conference, the gaps between the theory and practice of capacity building will be critically examined. We chose this theme in order to construct knowledge in the social, economic, cultural and political arenas and to facilitate change in Oromia and the Greater Horn of Africa. We believe the knowledge produced by this conference will help the Oromo and other peoples to critically look at the policy of the rulers and international donors and encourage the peoples to participate in policy making and challenge misguided policies and practices. In addition, the knowledge that will be produced by this conference will create awareness of the entitlement of people in identifying and prioritizing their needs. At the same time, this kind of knowledge will encourage the so-called donor organizations and states to re-examine their policies and practices in providing aid.

How does a dictatorial and colonial system of governance affect the capacity building of a society? Although the idea of capacity building is assumed to be one of enabling people, the funding organization never questions where and how the funds are used. Recently the Human Rights Watch (2010) reported that the Ethiopian government uses the resources they get from international donors to weaken opposition political parties. This means the resources that supposed to be used to build the capacity of people are used to build the capacity of the state engaged more in incapacitating the people. For example, Ilfinesh Kenno (1995), a songwriter and vocalist Oromo woman who was jailed and tortured by Ethiopian security forces expressed her grief and observation in the form of a song:

In Oromo:

Rifeensa mataale gogaa isaa aadamne
 Biyya abbaa keenya irratti diinaan dhunfatamnee
 Akkuma bosonuu ariamne ajjeefamnee
 Maqaa dimokrasin baè ukkamamne

In English:

Even they shaved our hair dry
 In our own country the enemy has possessed us
 Just like the wild antelope we are chased and killed
In the name of democracy they suffocated us a lot.

(Translation is mine.)

For people in the Horn of Africa, capacity building is essential if countries and its people are to succeed in the competitive market- oriented world. Capacity is an indispensable condition required for the people to cope in a changing and unpredictable world. I believe that the grassroots communities are then in a better position to understand their problems, identify their needs and address their concerns. I hope our keynote speakers and presenters will bring to light some of the gaps in the literature on issues surrounding theories and practices in capacity building. At the end of the conference we will have hopefully learned some of the ways we can foster the ability of individuals and communities in Oromia and surrounding regions can create a stable society and sustainable development.

Using this opportunity I would like to thank the Institute of African Studies of Carleton University and the director of the department Dr. Blair Rutherford for providing OSA the logistics need to run such a conference. It would have been very difficult for the OSA, a non-profit scholarly organization, to engage in producing knowledge on the issues of the Oromo and other peoples in the Horn of Africa and framing research issues from the perspective of marginalized people in the region without this help. I encourage other institutions to follow the example of Carleton University, provide some logistics to the OSA and subscribe to the Journal of Oromo Studies (JOS) and expose young learners to a scholarly literature written from the perspective of the Oromo people from the Horn of Africa.

Thank you,
 Begna Fufa Dugassa., PhD
 OSA President

Galatooma

Merci

Preliminary Program

DATE & TIME	ACTIVITIES	TOPICS
April, 2, 2011 Time: 8:30- 9:00 am	Registration	
9:00 –9:50 am	Opening remarks from the local organizing committee, Oromo Elders and OSA President	Traditional Oromo blessing and Welcome notes
10:00 –10:45 am	Panel (I) Media, Regard for Human Rights and Capacity Building in Oromia Chair: Mr. Waaqasaa Presenters: 1. Tesfaye Dheresa 2. Gaaromaa Waaqasaa	Media, Regard for Human Rights and Capacity Building in Oromia
11:00 –11:45 am	Panel (2) Policy in capacity building Chair: TBA 1. Harwood Schaffer,. PhD University of Tennessee at Knoxville 2. Valerie Dye., PhD The University of Manchester	2. Revisiting Intergovernmental decision making in the WTO: Promoting Capacity Building from bottom up
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00 – 1:45 pm	Keynote Speaker (1) Prof. Ezekiel Gebissa Kettering University, USA	Capacity Development as a Breakthrough: Toward Good Practice in Managing Oromo Affairs
1:45 – 2:00 pm	Obbo Tesfaye Dheresa	Oromo worldview and self concept --in poetic form
2:00 – 3:45 pm	Panel (3) Collective rights & capacity building Chair: 1. Fowsia Abdulkadir 2. Begna Dugassa., PhD	Dealing with Religious Diversity in Ethiopia 2. Collective Rights & Public Health Capacity
3:45 - 4:00 pm	Coffee Break	
4:00 - 4:45 pm	Roundtable Discussion Chair: TBA 1. Prof. Ezekiel Gebbisa 2. Tesfaye Dheresa 3. Fosa Abdulahi 4. Begna Dugassa., PhD	Building Capacity on Oromuuma (Oromoness)
5pm – 6:30 pm	Traditional Oromo Songs and dances	Oromo Youth from Toronto

DATE & TIME	ACTIVITIES	TOPICS
April 3, 2011		
Time: 10:00 am- 10:30 am	Mohammed Hassen Ali., PhD	An obstacle to capacity building in Oromia: Ethiopian landownership policy
10:30 am- 11:15 am	Keynote Speaker (2) Haile Hirpha., PhD	The Role of Education in Capacity Building and How the Successive Ethiopian Governments Denied the Oromo People Educational Opportunities.
11:15 – 11: 30am	Obbo Tesfaye Dheresa	Sprout your roots on Oromuuma (Oromoness) in poetic form
11:30-11:45am	Coffee break	
12:00 am- 1:00 pm	Dialogue between community leaders & scholars on capacity building. Participants: a. Oromo women’s perspective Addee Derartu Abbajobir b. Oromo community leaders 1. Dr. Tesfaye Negeri 2. Obbo Walde-Michael Bariso	The role of community leaders and members in building the capacity of Oromo people in Oromia and in diaspora and promoting sustainable development.
1:00pm– 1:15 pm	Closing Remarks 1. Obbo Bakalcha Abdosh	Closing Remarks

Abstracts of the Mid Year OSA conference

Capacity Development as a Breakthrough: Toward Good Practice in Managing Oromo Affairs

Prof. Ezekiel Gebissa

Kettering University

(Keynote speaker)

In recent decades, the development discourse has emphasized capacity development as one of the effective measures of managing and sustaining development. The term refers a wide array of activities a group engages in to strengthen its capacity to work together, solve its problems, and achieve its objectives. This process involves providing the group with the knowledge, skills and tools it needs to identify and define problems, and formulate workable solutions. Broadly speaking, capacity development aims at building the ability of individuals, organizations, and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully. As such it is a concept that has the promise of a breakthrough for Oromo society to move beyond the apparent intractability of its current predicaments. To that end, the Oromo society needs to harness its core assets in its historical and cultural repertoire in order to achieve its full potential and overcome the gargantuan challenges it faces. Above all, it needs to develop its organizational capacity to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts. In this presentation, I will focus on how to build political capacity, conflict resolution capacity, and the ability to pursue sustainable development strategies.

An obstacle to capacity building in Oromia: Ethiopian landownership policy

Associate Prof. Mohammed Hassen Ali

Georgia State University

Abstract

The Oromo people constitute more than forty percent of the population of Ethiopia. They are the single largest national group in Ethiopia and the third largest in Africa. Oromia is the richest and the most densely populated regional state in Ethiopia. Probably more than or around eighty five percent of the Oromo are subsistence farmers, who lack not only access to adequate land, modern scientific farming methods, fertilizers, capital, but also their immense potential for building economic, educational, cultural, political, scientific and social capacities have never been realized. The paper will examine how the Ethiopian landownership policy has been major hindrance to capacities building among the Oromo in Ethiopia. In fact, since their conquest and incorporation into the Ethiopian empire, not a single Ethiopian government respected the Oromo people's right to own their own land. Even today, under the so-called democratic federal republic of Ethiopia, Oromo peasants are removed Oromo from their land in the name of economic development. This policy in many ways is similar to Emperor Menelik's policy of expropriation of Oromo lands during and after the 1880s. Almost one hundred forty years after Menelik colonized Oromia, once again, in the sacred land of their birth the Oromo are becoming landless and right less subjects, who are slowly becoming new gabars (serfs) for the emerging greedy and brutal local capitalist class and international corporations. The similarities between Menelik's policy and that of the current Ethiopian regime are striking, including horrendous crimes against humanity, an ideology of domination that stripped any independent Oromo leadership or organization from having any meaningful political, social and economic role in Oromia, expropriation of land, denial of basic human and democratic rights and using terror for forcing the Oromo into submission. These similarities stand as clear proof that since their colonization, the Oromo people were

not offered opportunities by successive Ethiopian regimes for bettering themselves by building capacities in different fields. Consequently today, compared to their large size, the Oromo are the least educated, probably the least urbanized, have a very limited access to modern medical facilities with very limited capacity for dealing with problems of health, ignorance and poverty.

Collective Rights and Building Public Health Capacity

Begna Fufa Dugassa., PhD

Toronto Public Health

Abstract

The history of public health under colonial rule suggests that colonialism is directly associated with poverty, famine and diseases. For example, Britain colonized Ireland-- its neighbour and subjected its people to poverty, famine and forced migration. Russia did the same thing to Ukraine and subjected the people to famine and forced migration. In the same way, Ethiopia colonized the Oromo people and subjected them to poverty, famine and diseases. Wherever it happens, the colonial agenda is driven by racial superiority theory and economic interests. Ethiopian colonialism is similarly intended to institute racial, cultural hierarchy and exploit Oromia and the Oromo people. To pacify Oromia and maintain the colonial power relations with little or no resistance, the Ethiopian government's policies are designed to incapacitate the Oromo people. For example, although the Oromo people are the single largest ethno-national group in the Ethiopian empire and the Horn of Africa, Amaharic is the working language for the Federal Government of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government's social, economic, political policies and legal system are designed to divide and incapacitate the Oromo people. In order to accomplish this, three chartered cities Finfinee (or Addis Ababa), Harar and Dire Dawa were created. For the same reason, the Oromia zone has been incorporated in the Amahara region. As a result of these longstanding Ethiopian government policies, the Oromo people have been conditioned to extreme poverty and diseases. This suggests that if global policies are intended to develop the capacity of the Oromo people, the first step should be identifying the social conditions that work against them, tackling these conditions and creating social conditions in which the Oromo people can empower themselves.

In this paper, I first define the concept of collective rights, capacity building and public health. In the second part, I take a close look at the relationships between collective rights, capacity building and public health conditions. In the third part, I specifically look at the ways that violation of economic rights, which is linked to poverty and malnutrition, are implicated to human capacity in Oromia. Under this, I examine the ways macro and micronutrient deficiencies affect the mental and physical capacity of the children, their educability and productivity. In the conclusion, I argue that the goals and motives of capacity building should be guided by the principles of human rights and equity. Capacity building theories and practices that do not take into consideration the political power relations at the local and global level are prone to be used in building the capacity of colonial or dictatorial states. Tackling the colonial power is an essential condition to build public health capacity in Oromia.

Ethiopian Torture Survivors

Gaaromaa Waaqasaa-- The founder and executive director of the Human Rights Leagues of Horn of Africa

Abstract

Torture survivors are uniquely strong and amazing people. They endured and survived the most preposterous acts of physical and psychological torture and showed the strength to reclaim their right to life once again. As most of us have witnessed at different times in our lives, the vast majority of torture

victims are civilians who, until their incarceration and torture, had been living ordinary lives and had no relation with what they were suspected of and tortured. What happened to them left them and their loved ones in life of darkness.

Even though not all survivors bear visible scars or wounds on their bodies, all of them undoubtedly have heavy wound in their minds. Psychological torture, which never leaves noticeable scars or wounds behind, is the most widespread method in secret and illegal detentions in Ethiopia. Some torturers tend to favour psychological torture simply because it is easy to deny its occurrence and escape responsibilities; as it does not leave behind any physical signs, which makes it harder to verify and document.

In Ethiopia, torture survivors have no access to medical treatment. Most of them die after a while because of the lack of treatment. Another important point to note is that not all survivors are at the same level of mental state or stage of revival. Almost all torture survivors in Ethiopia suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Symptoms include flashbacks, severe anxiety, insomnia, nightmares, depression and memory loses.

The United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading treatment or Punishment (10 December 1984) under article 2 clearly states the absolute prohibition of torture, and requires parties to take effective measures to prevent it in any territory under its jurisdiction. Ethiopia has been a signatory to this convention since 1994. However, it has failed to fulfill its obligation by not filing either the initial or periodic report for more than 14 years. This conscious silence of the Ethiopian Government for this all time was not without reasons. It was to hide from international attention the inhuman and degrading acts committed against ordinary citizens of the Country by its security agents in breach of those international treaties.

Although this prohibition is absolute, "No exceptional circumstances whatsoever", Ethiopia has ignored the convention and practice the intentional infliction of extreme physical and psychological suffering on some non-consenting defenseless citizens. The following are some of the many most recent Oromo torture victims in Ethiopian. These individuals, males and females, have been suffering either directly or indirectly from the practice of torture by Ethiopian authorities in the past.

Capacity Building for Change: A reflection on 40 years of personal experience

Rev. Dr. Harwood Schaffer
 Research Assistant Professor Agricultural Policy Analysis Center
 University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, Knoxville, TN

In my presentation, I want to move away from the usual academic analysis as I reflect upon the issue of human capacity building for the liberation of the Oromo nation. I want to do this by reflecting upon 40 years of leadership in both a formal voluntary organization and in social movements for the liberation of people. In my experience the tasks involved in human capacity building are the same whether one is in working in a formal religious organization or a diffuse social movement that seeks the liberation of human beings. The five tasks I want to talk about are vision, ownership, empowerment, accountability, and the importance of drawing upon cultural wisdom.

The Role of Education in Capacity Building and How the Successive Ethiopian Governments Denied the Oromo People Educational Opportunities

Haile Hirpa, PhD—the former President of the Oromo Studies Association

Abstract

In human history education has been the corner stone in capacity building of a society, a nation or a country. In a society or in a country where one group oppressed another group or groups, the oppressed have always been denied the opportunities of education. In most cases the educated groups have an advantage over the uneducated groups.

In South Africa, during the Apartheid era, the Apartheid government imposed an inferior education on the black people. The black people's education was limited to 4th grade. The goal was to produce black people who could read and write their names and production manuals so that could be servitude. With fourth grade education the black people could be maids, cooks, baby sitters, car drivers, farmers and coal miners. To decrease the quality of the black people education, the Apartheid government reduced the 40 minutes class period to 20 minutes class time. In 20 minutes the teachers could not teach for more than 10 minutes in one period. The first minutes were spent on roll calling and the last five on assigning homework for the next day.

In 1976, when schoolchildren took to the streets to protest the schools in South Africa, they revealed one of the government's insidious strategies for controlling the black population: training them into servitude for the white minority. These African youth objected to the inferior education they were receiving, an education that continually reinforced their status in society. For example, as late as 1980, one Cape Town school used an Afrikaans dictionary that defined baas (boss) as "the name of a white man" while meit (maid) was defined as "the name of a black or coloured woman." Further, terms like swartgoed ("black thing") was defined as "black labourer".

Though anti-apartheid activists around the world applauded the school children's objections to such

centuries. The society of Ethiopia expects teachers and parents to use corporal punishment to maintain order and discipline. Most believe that through punishing children for bad habits they in turn learn good ones. Also since the mid-1970s there have been drastic losses of professionals who leave the country for political and economical reasons. As of 2006, there are more Ethiopia-trained doctors living in Chicago than in the entire country of Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Governments that have been ruling Ethiopia for more than hundred years colonized Oromia and have been implementing the Apartheid educational policies perfected in South Africa by the white minority ruling class on the Oromo people. Menelik who initiated the modern education system in Ethiopia limited modern education to the Amhara elites by banning all languages in Ethiopia, except Amharic. Haile Selassie perfected Menelik's educational system and declared all printings to be in Amharic and English. As a result, Oromos were forced to publish the Oromo Bible in Kenya. Without knowing, Haile Selassie appointed an Oromo General to suppress Oromo culture and Oromo language. This appointee was General Tadesse Biru. General Tadesse Biru exposed the secret of Haile Selassie and defected. When Derg came to power, it approved the use of limited Radio and TV time in Afaan Oromoo, but banned any opposition group in the country. It became a criminal act if five people came together.

The current government of Meles Zenawi has been dismantling the Oromo educational opportunities in the most milieus methodology. Meles divided the country into Zones and declared artificial operating plans. He dictated to the Oromo Zone to deliver school instructions in local language only, but kept Amharic and English to be the official languages of Ethiopia. In Tigray the medium of instruction remained English and Amharic. This is a planned scheme to keep all Oromos away from federal jobs. In addition, school-leaving exam was reduced to 10th. Oromo students fail at 10th grade and become the daily laborers in dirty jobs with minimum wages, while the Tigray students go to Universities and become professionals. The Apartheid policy kept the South Africa majority blacks under functional illiteracy by limiting them to fourth grade; While the Meles government is doing the same thing to the Oromos by limiting them to 10th grade. This policy is intended to creating a generation void in the Oromo Society.

Media, Human Rights, Capacity Building and Development in Oromia

Tesfaye Dheresa—the former editor and producer of **Urjii** Weekly News Paper

Abstract

There is no country in the world that is more synonymous with recurring famine, chronic poverty and underdevelopment than Ethiopia. Despite a high incidence of internal conflicts and civil wars with devastating socio-economic impacts, the attention given to Ethiopia by international media has been very little. The advancement of information technology, which is enormously facilitating socio-economic growth and development in other parts of the world, is hardly making an impression in the case of Ethiopia. Internet service is almost nonexistent compared even with most African countries. The government in power has been one of the top countries in the world, for the last fifteen years, in the list of the worst enemies of journalists and independent media, despite the legally provided press freedom. Also, civil wars have not come to an end, and human rights violations are allegedly reported

by various local, regional and international human rights organizations to have been rampant even after democracy has been declared constitutionally.

Utilizing data collected from different sources, this research paper attempts to see if there have been interconnections between human rights violations, including press freedom, and the efforts of capacity building in Ethiopian on one hand, and the recurring famine, chronic poverty and underdevelopment in which the Country has been caught. The impacts of human rights violations, including the right to freedom of expression, on capacity building will be at the center of this research paper; while the hitherto witnessed political cultures of the Country, as they apply to the economic and political lives of the nations and nationalities, will be touched up on. My paper would argue that the honoring and fulfillment of fundamental human rights are prerequisites for peace, stability and capacity building, which in turn are at the core of sustainable development.

Revisiting Intergovernmental decision making in the WTO: Promoting Capacity Building from bottom up

Valerie Dye., PhD

Abstract

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) promotes trade liberalisation among member states under the most favoured nation principle. It has succeeded the GATT regime, which regulated trade liberalisation prior to the WTO's emergence in 1995. However, unlike the GATT regime the WTO has a more established and profound institutional framework including a dispute settlement body to handle trade disputes among its members. Due to the impact the WTO's policies have had on the livelihood of people across the globe, we may no longer refer to it as a regime for the regulation of international trade but more so as a body that has taken a 'governance turn' in relation to trade. The reach of WTO governance extends to farmers in Africa, to AIDS sufferers around the world and to ordinary citizens who are affected by the prices and availability of goods due to the policies of trade liberalisation. It is clear then that the stakeholders in WTO governance are citizens. Yet decision-making is done inter-governmentally among states with very little input from citizens. The impact of this is that citizens are left out of major decisions that affect their lives. With regard to the Oromos this impact is even greater as they are already marginalized from mainstream national political life. The lack of input into the decision making of the WTO calls into question its legitimacy and raises questions about how capacity building can be facilitated in order to enhance its legitimacy. If the WTO is to be viewed as a legitimate international organisation then decision making along purely intergovernmental lines must be replaced with a system of multi level decision making involving citizens directly or indirectly through their representatives. Indeed a role has been carved out for NGOs and non-state actors within the WTO. This role is merely a consultative one and operates in an ad hoc manner with no clear guidelines or institutionalised provisions regulating the role of NGOs or any other citizen representatives. This paper outlines the shortcomings of purely intergovernmental decision making mechanisms and outlines a framework for incorporating citizens into decision making. This framework embodies the use of knowledge sharing to educate citizens about the work of the WTO so that they can make a more meaningful contribution to its policies.

Denial of Religious and Ethno-national Diversity in Ethiopia

F. Abdulkadir

Abstract

Ethiopia is a multi ethno-national empire, with diverse religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Although the reality of the Ethiopian empire is a mosaic with substantial diversity, oftentimes, the face and image of Ethiopia is portrayed to the international community only through the lenses of an orthodox Christian country. For this reason, some scholars such as Dugassa, contend that Ethiopia was dominated and ruled by Abyssinian monarchy who promoted the image of a Christian Ethiopia. However, little is known about Ethiopia's religious and ethno-national diversity...

Dugassa (2006), posits that Ethiopian identity and/or Ethiopia ness, has been constructed by Abyssinian Christian rulers. And Ethiopian Christian rulers have imposed, what the author calls "a particular historical narrative that legitimized an Ethiopian image that portrays and promotes a Christian Ethiopia dominated by the Abyssinian cultural identity," and deliberately marginalizes other religious and cultural identities in the empire. There is a large number of Muslims in the Ethiopian empire; however, they are politically and economically marginalized. For example, the region of Oromia is homeland to the single largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, and large segments of the Oromo population are Muslims. The Somali Regional State of Ethiopia, is homeland to ethnic Somalis, who are 99% Muslim Ethiopians. Analyzing secondary data, this paper aims to examine how millions of Muslims in Ethiopia were marginalized and excluded from the governance structures of the country, hence denying large numbers of Ethiopian society access to political power.

In addition, this research paper will attempt to underline the importance of identifying and addressing some 'pre-conditions' that could be, essential to build the capacity to in democratization of Ethiopia. Given that Ethiopia has been ruled by exclusive autocratic Abyssinian monarch and dictators, I argue that there is a need to develop capacity and set the mechanisms in which to address historical wrongdoings that put into place solid foundation for democracy and ensure substantive ethnic, religious and cultural equity in Ethiopia. Substantive equitable political processes ideally, would transform it into a place where historically marginalized people such as the Oromos, Sidama, Somalis and others in the South are no longer subjected to systematic exclusionary policies. Participation of diverse religious and ethno-national groups in the decision-making processes is essential for capacity building.

OSA Scholars at International Conferences

Panel Proposal for “Ethnic Canons in Global Context” Conference MELUS—Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States

7-10 April 2011

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Panel Title: "Ethiopia, African-American Literature, and Oromo Ethnic Identity"

Panel Chair: Steven W. Thomas
Assistant Professor
English Department
St. John’s University
Collegeville, MN 56321
e-mail: swthomas@csbsju.edu
office phone: 320-363-3193

Panel Abstract: The goal of the panel is to examine two phenomenon together: (1) the importance of Ethiopia symbolically to the African-American literary canon, and (2) the recent publication of fiction and poetry by Ethiopian immigrants in the United States. The panel aims to gain recognition of the ethnic diversity within Ethiopia. American literature has historically imagined Ethiopia as a single culture, but many immigrants coming to the United States from Ethiopia identify themselves differently -- either as Oromo or as one of Ethiopia's many other ethnic groups, as there are over 80 languages spoken there. This panel’s transnationally-inflected argument is that the field of multiethnic literature in the United States ought to better understand the multiethnic culture from which immigrants to America came. The panel has gathered together a diverse range of scholars: a professor of American literature, a professor of Oromo history, a poet and ethnographer who only this year immigrated to the United States from Ethiopia, and a recent college graduate.

Individual Presentations and Panelists:

(1) "Ethiopian History in African-American Literature"

Steven W. Thomas, Assistant Professor of English, St. John's University, Minnesota

This paper will examine the symbolic importance of Ethiopia in African-American literature from the late 18th to the 21st century. Its thesis is that African-American literature synthesized a utopian sense of liberation with selective use of anthropological and historical data about Ethiopia in a manner that produced a monocultural notion of Ethiopian space. However, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, literary production by Ethiopian immigrants has the potential to produce a paradigm shift in the cultural imagination. Hence, the relationship between the African-American literary canon and the new Ethiopian immigrant writers is symbolically overdetermined by centuries of cultural history.

(2) “Language and Education in Ethiopia”

Angela Mathis, Graduate of the College of St. Benedict, Minnesota

This paper presents an overview of the history and use of regional languages in Ethiopia's education system as well as an evaluation of the cultural effects of the new system. Although regional languages were prohibited from schools in the past, the government decided in the mid-90s to incorporate them in the education system. Today, in primary school, regional languages are the language of instruction. Students take classes in Amharic, the national language, as well. By high school, most courses are in English. While preserving regional languages is important for maintaining cultural identity, not having a common national language could be detrimental as well.

(3) "The Torturous Development of Written Oromo Literature"

Mohammed Hassen, Associate Professor of History, Georgia State University

The development of written Oromo literature has been torturous because of the policies of successive Ethiopian governments which retarded and stunted its development. This paper examines what educated Oromo, both Christians and Muslims, did to counter Ethiopian government policies and thus, against numerous odds, cultivating the development of written literature, the ultimate beauty of Oromo language. The paper stresses the need for moving away from the narrow vision that does not allow flowering of languages other than one language in Ethiopia and demonstrate the importance of developing written literature in the many Ethiopian languages for enriching the cultural and spiritual well-being of all the people of Ethiopia. Written literature in the Oromo and other Ethiopian languages deepens our appreciation and admiration for the cultural vitality of the Ethiopian people.

(4) "Ethnographic Mystic: The Self in Folkloric Field Research"

Aseffa Tefera Dibaba, Poet and Independent Scholar

The topic is a methodological concern regarding the Positionality, Reflexivity, and Intersubjectivity complex one faces in conducting a folkloric field research as an insider/outsider. My purpose is to rethink self-reflexively and tackle the challenge of who/where am I and who is the 'Other' in the field, drawing on my folkloric PhD field experience in Salale, Ethiopia, from December 2009 to July 2010.

Waldaa Qorannoo Oromoo



Oromo Studies Association

P.O Box 32391, Fridley, MN 55432

www.oromosudies.org

March 2, 2011

Mr. Antonio Guterres
 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
 Case Postale 2500
 CH-1211 Genève 2 Dépôt
 Suisse.
 Email: InfoDesk@ohchr.org

Mr. Bekele Geleta
 International Federation of Red Cross
 and Red Crescent Societies
 P.O. Box 372
 CH-1211 Geneva 19
 Switzerland
 Email: info@redcross.ch

Dear Mr. Guterres and Mr. Geleta,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Oromo Studies Association (OSA) to express my grave concern about the situation of Oromo refugees in Libya. Reliable sources from Tripoli tell the Voice of America (VOA) that at least two Oromo refugees have been killed and hundreds of them are stranded in several places. One of the persons killed was denied treatment in hospital in Tripoli.

OSA is a scholarly, multi-disciplinary, non-profit international organization, established to promote studies of issues relevant to the Oromo people. The Oromo people constitute the single largest national group in the Ethiopian Empire and the Greater Horn of Africa. Oromia stretches from Kenya in the south, Sudan in the West and Tigray region in the North. The number of Oromo people and the geographical location of Oromia make them the only force that can stabilize the Horn of Africa. To monopolize the political and economic power, the Tigray minority government in Ethiopia targeted the Oromo people with the purpose of

incapacitating them. Political killings, imprisonments and torture against the Oromo people have been going on for nearly two decades. To escape from such gross human rights violations, many Oromo refugees have been forced to flee from their homeland and are dispersed all over Africa and the world. Among them over 300 Oromo refugees are currently stranded in Libya. Many countries of the world are moving their citizens out of Libya and nearly 150,000 people left that country within a week. However, the lives of the stateless Oromo refugees are in great danger. These refugees need the help of International organizations like UNHCR and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. I appeal to you to move these Oromo refugees away from the conflict zones and settle them in safer areas as quickly as possible.

The Oromo refugees in Libya have nothing to do with the political conflict between the two Libyan factions. The Oromo refugees are there because they were persecuted in their homeland. I appeal to the Libyan government forces and the opposition groups to take appropriate care of these stateless Oromo refugees.

At the same time, I would also like to appeal to those countries such as Canada, the U.S.A, Australia, New Zealand, Norway and others who accept refugees to speed up the applications of these stranded refugees and help to re-settle them. I appeal for help for these stateless refugees so that they can help themselves and in return help the society in which they are going to settle.

Thank you,

Begna Dugassa., PhD

OSA President

CC:

U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Uscis.webmaster@dhs.gov

Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism
Canada

Minster@cic.gc.ca

Unrepresented Nation and People Organization

UNPO Secretariat

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the Netherlands

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Fax: +31 (0)70 3646608

Email: www.unpo@unpo.org

Refugee Council of Australia

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Phone: 02 9211 9333, Fax: 02 9211 9288

E-mail: www.admin@refugeecouncil.org.au; www.info@refugeecouncil.org.au;

Norwegian Directorate of Immigration

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Immigration New Zealand

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Wellington

NEW ZEALAND

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Waldaa Qorannoo Oromoo



Oromo Studies Association

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April 24, 2010

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
www.whitehouse.gov

Subject: The attack on the Oromo and other people of Ethiopia

Dear President Obama,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Oromo Studies Association (OSA) to bring to your attention the widespread imprisonment and indiscriminate shootings of Oromo students, men and women of different ages, religious backgrounds, and professions by the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) led Ethiopian government - motivated by fear and hate against the Oromo people. Members of OSA request your administration to use your enormous influence with the government of Ethiopia to stop the imprisonments and killings of innocent Oromo and other people of Ethiopia.

OSA is a scholarly, multi-disciplinary, non-profit organization. OSA was established 25 years ago by international scholars from around the globe to promote studies related and relevant to the Oromo and other peoples in the Horn of Africa. In its attempt to create academic forums where ideas and research findings about the Oromo and other people of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa are freely discussed, OSA has periodic publications, semi-annual and annual conferences. The Journal of Oromo (JOS), published twice annually, is gaining reputation among scholars and institutions vested in the study of Indigenous societies. Several American university libraries and the Library of Congress subscribe to JOS. It has also drawn the attention of students interested in pursuing studies in the Horn of Africa. Last year OSA digitalized all the previous issues of JOS and made it freely available to all college, university libraries and students interested in Oromo studies and the Greater Horn of Africa.

Our scholars have recorded that in the Abyssinian culture hatred against the Oromo people is deeply rooted. Such a deeply rooted hatred was responsible for the colonization of the Oromo people and the mass killing against them, an event that is recorded in the collective memory of the Oromo people as “the Hand and Breast mutilation of Annolee” and “the year of human eater”. Several European travelers have recorded these horrendous events. Indeed, the written

records that these travelers left suggest that the widespread killings, slavery, mutilation, famine and epidemic diseases introduced wittingly/deliberately wiped out two-thirds of the Oromo people. The colonization of Oromia led to the dispossession of its people from Oromo land, the denial of the Oromo language legal status, denial of the Oromo people leadership, and using young Oromo men as minesweepers. This conditioned the Oromo people to live in extreme poverty, illiteracy and exposed them to easily preventable diseases.

The Oromo people constitute the single largest national group in the Ethiopian Empire and the Greater Horn of Africa. The size of the Oromo population and the geographical location of their country, Oromia, make the Oromia regional state in the heart of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Empire mainly depends on the human and natural resources of Oromia. However, the Oromo people are one of the most impoverished and terrorized indigenous African people. The Zenawi regime fears the Oromo numerical voting power. In fear of free and fair election, the regime has been systematically destroying all independent Oromo organizations and closed down their newspapers and magazines. Even the Macha and Tulama Association, a civic association, which was established in 1963 was banned, its leaders detained, and its property confiscated. The Oromo Relief Association, which was established in 1979, was also closed down by the Zenawi's regime and millions of its properties are confiscated without due process. Out of hate and fear the TPLF led government is currently perpetuating collective violence and indiscriminate shooting against the Oromo students.

Currently the Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is worried that the people's revolution that forced the Tunisian and Egyptian dictatorial regimes to depart from power is coming to Ethiopia. Driven by fear, the Zenawi security forces in a single event shot and wounded over one hundred Oromo students in Tepi-Mizan University and are massively imprisoning Oromo men and women throughout the Ethiopian empire. Among those who were shot, several of them have life-threatening wounds. According to the Human Rights Leagues of the Horn (HRLHA, April 11, 2011) and the Voice of America (VOA) on April 12 -13, 2011, the students who are the victims of the rampage shooting did nothing illegal but simply asked the administration of the University to discipline the Mr. Zenawi's agent and cadre who made blatant racist remarks against the Oromo people.

Since 2004, no less than 10,000 Oromo students and teachers have been detained, several hundred students suspended or expelled from their university studies in that country and many students have been extra-judicially executed. The Ethiopian Human Rights Council listed the names of 349 Oromo students who were detained from Addis Ababa University in February 2004 and in the prison they were physically tortured. On April 26, 2004 CNN reported that more than 400 Oromo students have fled from ethnic persecution in Ethiopia to Kenya. Since 2004 massive detention of Oromo students, teachers and intellectuals have continued in Oromia, the Oromo regional state in Ethiopia. The goal is to deliberately cripple the educational achievement of Oromia, thus depriving the Oromo people skilled human capital in the future. The May 2005 Human Rights Watch report established patterns of human rights abuses in Oromia, where innocent people are subjected to arbitrary arrest, prolonged detention without trial, confiscation of property without due process of law and without any compensation and extra-judicial executions. The multi-faceted attack on the Oromo political organizations, cultural institutions, educational establishments, the press and the killings of Oromo men and women, young and

old, is truly reaching a very dangerous proportion. At this moment no calling is more urgent and no responsibility greater for the Prime Minister of Ethiopia than stopping the killing innocent people and detaining hundreds of students.

I am very worried about such rampage shootings, widespread imprisonings and the crimes with which the Zenawi regime is charging these innocent Oromo men and women. My worries are substantiated in literature. For example, literatures in Genocide Studies suggest that genocide has eight stages: Classification, Symbolization, Dehumanization, Organization, Polarization, Preparation, Extermination and Denial (Stanton, 1998). The Meles Zenawi regime has categorized the Oromo men and women who simply disagree with his policies as "terrorists". This has created not only fear and horror among the Oromo people but it has also allowed the military and security forces of the regime to act irresponsibly. Historically the Abyssinian monks and other religious leaders categorized the Oromo people with the "devil". The Oromo people were dehumanized and Abyssinian oral and written stories clearly tell us this (see, Aleqa Tayye, 1927 & Asma Giyorgis, 1989). Indeed, until recently the use of the Oromo language was prohibited in churches and mosques.

Racist attitudes toward the Oromo people are deeply rooted. For example, in 2006 at the University of Mekelle – Zenawi's home region a history instructor named Kassaye developed a curriculum to teach racist discourse about the Oromo people. In this publicly funded University, the professor was allowed to spread malicious, dehumanizing and racist stories about the Oromo people. Not only that, this University denied graduation certificate to the Oromo students who protested against these degrading and dehumanizing language used in the teachings (see, OSA, 2006 Letter). Prime Minister Zenawi and his colleagues are raised in such a culture.

To emphasize his popularity, Mr. Zenawi officially claims that his party members number over five million. Members of Zenawi's party are either bribed or brainwashed to be blind obedient rather than critical observers. The Human Rights Watch has clearly elaborated the ways in which prolonged meetings are used to indoctrinate and brainwash students, teachers and farmers into accepting the political agenda of the party. The party members are indoctrinated to categorize people as "us--friendly" and "others—the enemy—anti-peace, anti-development groups". The party members are organized to keep Mr. Zenawi in power by all means possible.

Although Mr. Zenawi claims double digit economic success, in the Ethiopian empire poverty and illiteracy levels remain extremely high. Using poverty and illiteracy as tools, the regime has been polarizing the people along the Ethno-national groups, clans and religious groups. For example, until recently in Oromia there were no religious conflicts; however, recently the regime has created such conflicts.

The literature on Genocide studies also suggest that the states or the regimes that at one point have perpetuated genocide and not been held accountable, would most likely commit another. Although the renowned international organization Genocide Watch has charged Mr. Zenawi for crimes against humanity in Oromia, Gambella, Ogden and other places, he has not been held accountable. In an act of genocide in 1999/2000, the regime deliberately

burned the natural forests of Oromia and caused ecological disaster to the region. Recently, the Zenawi regime has been arresting Oromo teachers, students, lawyers and intellectuals including former parliamentarians (Human Rights Watch, April 6, 2011). According to a New York Times report (Apr 7, 2011), defying the call of Human Rights Watch to release these prisoners, the regime charged in a kangaroo court 121 men and women as “terrorists”.

Mr. President:

The Ethiopian prime Minister Meles Zenawi is from Tigray-- a minority ethno/national group that probably constitutes no more than 5 million people. He is extensively using Tigray nationals as secret agents, security forces, police officers, military, courts and other key decision making positions. This has created resentment against Tigray nationals. To counter-balance the Zenawi's divide and rule policy, the people of the three largest ethno-national groups (Oromo, Amahara and Ogden) are talking about the need to forge an alliance between them. On the other hand, those Tigray nationals who are wittingly or knowingly choose to associate with Zenawi regime are simply creating fear. Fear, real or not, can be very dangerous. The recent shooting of Oromo students, where over a hundred students were wounded and hundreds imprisoned, result from such fear and hate. As Mr. Zenawi has predicted, if the uprising of the people starts fear, hate and the resentment factors can play into it and might lead to extreme violence.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Ethiopia is the country that receives the largest financial aid from the Western world and enjoys diplomatic and military support. Those security forces involved in the rampage shooting and mass arrest are trained by the Western military, security and police forces and their salary is paid from the financial aid given to the Ethiopian government. This makes the Western countries (USA, Germany, Britain, France, Italia, Japan, Canada and Russia) who trained Zenawi's police and security forces and provided aid to pay their salary a complaisant to the rampage shootings and imprisonments.

The Oromo who constitute the single largest national group in Ethiopia have become the target of attack by the minority TPLF regime. The multi-faceted attack on the Oromo political organizations, cultural institutions, educational establishments, the press and the killings of Oromo men and women, young and old, is truly reaching a very dangerous proportion. At this moment no calling is more urgent and no responsibility greater for the Prime Minister of Ethiopia than stopping the killing innocent people, detaining hundreds of students and charging people for the crime they did not commit.

In the light of what has been stated above, which is a tip of an iceberg, I request you to take the following practical measures, which will reduce human misery and promote democracy in Ethiopia.

- Advise the government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to respects its own constitution, and stop its extra-judicial killings, rampage shootings and arbitrary arrests of innocent people and prolonged detention without trial.

- We request you to suspend all U.S. economic assistance to the Ethiopian government, other than relief materials to save lives, until such a time that the government of Meles Zenawi shows its commitment to the rule of law.
- Exert pressure on the Zenawi regime to bring individuals who have committed the killings and woundings to justice
- Advise Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to bring to speedy trial or unconditional release of hundreds of Oromo students who have been detained without due process of law.
- Advise the government of Meles Zenawi to allow all Oromo students to continue with their education freely, legally and peacefully without fear of harassment, detention and loss of life.

Finally, on behalf of OSA members, I request you to exert the energy and the power of your administration to create conducive political environment for establishment of the rule of law in Ethiopia. As the President of the most powerful country in the world, you have an extraordinary opportunity to alleviate the incredible human sufferings of the Oromo and other people in Ethiopia. OSA members thank you for your interest in the peace, stability and wellbeing of the Oromo and other people in the Horn of Africa.

Sincerely

Begna Dugassa., PhD
OSA President

This letter is copied to:**Secretary of State Hillary Clinton**

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President of Russia
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The President of the French Republic

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Amnesty International UK

The Human Rights Action Centre

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Email sct@amnesty.org.uk

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR THE 2011 OSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Theme:

Building Transformative and Dynamic Leadership and Facilitating the Empowerment of People in Oromia and the Greater Horn of Africa

Date: July 22-24, 2011

Venue: University of Minnesota

Objective:

In Oromia and in the Greater Horn of Africa, collective violence and human rights violations are widespread and recurrent famines and preventable diseases are taking the lives of millions of people each year. The efforts made by international organizations are ill-planned and do not address the core problems. Indeed, international aid is used by the Ethiopian government to repress and terrorize, to control and manipulate, and to perpetuate absolute poverty and powerlessness. The international aid industry has created two types of societies- charity givers (Euro-Americans) and charity receivers (the people of the Horn), legitimizing the use of global power that benefits only the few. The Ethiopian government has violated individual and collective rights of the Oromo people and denied them the right to develop independent institutions and leadership. To empower the Oromo people and to end their sufferings require a strong, united, and transformative leadership. This necessitates studying critically and thoroughly about the process of leadership and examining the challenges and the opportunities the Oromo people face in developing their leadership.

Expected outcomes

At the end of the conference, participants are expected to have a better understanding of the complexities in developing leadership, the challenges that colonized people face in the advancement of leadership, and the opportunities they have to do so. The participants are also expected to understand the importance of research on the issues of leadership formation and strategic planning.

Directions

In order to construct knowledge on the process of leadership development and introduce innovative cultural and political ideas and facilitate change in Oromia and the Greater Horn of Africa, the Oromo Studies Association (OSA) has selected its theme for the 2011 Annual Conference. For this conference, papers will be screened on the qualities of the theories the presenters offer and the practical applicability of the theories to Oromia and the Horn of Africa. The presenters can organize their papers around the following questions.

Theoretical issues

- How can we define, explain, conceptualise, and reflect on and critique the ideas of leadership and empowerment?
- What are the core questions to be asked in researching the issues of leadership & empowerment?
- What does it mean in practice to have leadership that empowers people?
- What are the importance of studying, theorizing, and examining the processes of leadership and empowerment?
- What are the shortcomings in our knowledge in the areas of leadership and empowerment?
- What kinds of methodologies and theoretical frameworks can we apply to examine the relationships between leadership and empowerment?

Practical issues

- Some scholars explain that leadership is something that is learned and others regard it as something that you grow with as part of the culture. If the colonized people do not have control on their education and resources, how can they influence the type of leadership their children should develop?
- If a society is under a colonial rule and has no control over its social, economic, political, cultural and environmental affairs, what type of leadership can its children develop?
- What are the manifestations of the presence and absence of a strong leadership?
- What are the pathways through which leadership can influence the empowerment of people?
- What are the 'lived realities' of Oromo leaders under the Ethiopian colonial administration?
- How can we cultivate a kind of leadership that is accountable to the people?
- How did global powers under-develop the leadership of the colonized people like the Oromo?
- What are the relationships between human rights violations and the underdevelopment of leadership?
- How does culture positively or negatively influence the development of leadership?

- What are the impacts of the denial of leadership?
- How are the colonial schooling (formal educational curricula) and the informal teachings (religious teachings) influencing leadership development and the empowerment of people?
- What are the differences in cultures that promote democratic leadership and supports justice and equality and ones that foster dictatorship and underdevelopment?
- What are the roles of information and scientific technology in the development of leadership and empowerment of people?

Paper submissions:

You can send your abstracts from January 3rd 2011 to April 30th, 2011 to Dr. Begna Dugassa at b.dugassa@utoronto.ca

Full papers are expected by May 15th, 2011

We accept both individual papers and panels.

Thank you,

Galatooma