

Oromo American Citizen Council

Press release May 7, 2008

The Oromo American Citizen Council joins the Worldwide March for Freedom, Justice and Human Rights in Ethiopia, starting on May 15, 2008 and ending on March 18

We in the Oromo American Citizen Council are writing this letter to declare that we are joining our sisters and brothers of Ethiopia in the March for Freedom, Justice and Human Rights to be held on May 15 - 18, 2008, especially remembering those who fought and died for human rights, freedom, and democracy in Ethiopia.

We are not only commemorating the abortive Democratic Elections of May 2005, but the event will also serve as a reminder and commemoration of all the atrocities against Ethiopia and its people throughout Ethiopia since 1992.

The Oromo, as well as countless other Ethiopians, have suffered. We have often worked independently to stop these abuses, but it is clear that as we continue our endeavor, we must stand shoulder to shoulder to work together to further this cause if we are to succeed.

The 2005 massacre in the Ethiopian capital is only symptomatic of a much bigger political problem. Even though the May 2005 election in Ethiopia was hailed as a step forward in many corners, the current government is ruling over the Ethiopian against their consent.

Our major worry at this time is, unless this is resolved, and resolved to the satisfaction of all the major contending forces, is that the crisis could spin out of control and lead to a full-blown civil war, something which could destabilize the whole of the Horn of Africa.

The continuation of human rights violations in Ethiopia has been partly made possible because the international community has chosen to turn a blind eye to what is happening in Ethiopia. This problem was exacerbated since Ethiopia jumped on the bandwagon of anti-terrorism.

It is our firm belief that Ethiopia supported the anti-terrorism coalition, precisely to get soft treatment from other coalition forces regarding her human rights violation issues. We believe human rights issues should not be traded off for the fake support one gives to anti-terrorism forces.

The international community should in an unequivocal manner tell the Ethiopian government that it should stop the killings and hold free and fair elections in the future. This is a great opportunity for all of us Ethiopians to show our solidarity. So, let us stand together and make our voices heard! It is up to all of us to make these efforts succeed. We call on all other Oromo to come out, wherever you are throughout the world and support this effort.

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