

## WE ARE PAYING THE PRICE FOR FREEDOM

The Oromo people seek to regain their sovereignty where freedom, democracy and justice reign supreme of their land; similar to the struggle of the Eritrean, South Sudan and Scotland people.

However, the struggle against the successive Ethiopian regime including the current TPLF lead government of Ethiopia has brought numerous genocides against the Oromo people and gross violation of human rights since 1990.

- According to Amnesty International between 2011 and 2014, at least 5000 Oromos have been arrested based on their actual or suspected peaceful opposition to the government.
- Since April 25, 2014, 85 students are confirmed as dead, 500 protestors wounded and over 5000 people detained in unknown camp locations as the government restriction of public media..
- In May 2008, more than 400 Oromo civilians including elderly men, women and children in Eastern Wallega of Oromia region were massacred by the agents of the regime
- In April 2008, more than 50 Oromos in the Borana region were massacred in similar fashion.
- In February 2008, more than 100 Oromo refugees were massacred in Bossaso, Somalia by the Ethiopian troops stationed there.
- In February 2007, the Killing Mountain (Gara Sufi massacre) took place in Eastern Oromia. More than 20 farmers including a 14 year old girl were killed.
- In 2007, Oromo refugees in Kenya were killed in cold blood by the agents of Meles Zenawi regime.
- In 2006, more than 100 Oromo men, women and children were massacred by Meles agents in Western Haraghe of Oromia region.



**'BECAUSE I  
AM OROMO'**  
SWEEPING REPRESSION IN THE  
OROMIA REGION OF ETHIOPIA

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



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## Oromo and Oromia

- Land of Gadaa
- Origin of Coffee
- Peace-loving people



## Population

The Oromo people are the native inhabitants estimated at 40 million in Eastern Africa. There are thousands of Oromo people living in diaspora, largely residing in countries including the United States of America, Australia, Canada, Norway, England and Sweden. The Oromo people refer to themselves as Oromo and their land as Oromia.

## The Land

The land of the peace-loving Oromo nation is called Oromia. Oromia was one of the free nations in the Horn of Africa until its colonization and occupation by Abyssinia at the end of the nineteenth century. It is approximately located between 2 degree and 12 degree N and between 34 degree and 44 degree E. It is bordered in the East by Ogadenia, Afar land and Djibouti, in the West by the Gambella, Sudan, in the South by Somalia, Kenya and others and in the North by Amhara and Tigre land or Abyssinia proper.

The land area is about 600 000 square kilometres. It is larger than France, and if Cuba, Bulgaria and Britain were put together, they would be approximately equal to Oromia in size. The capital city of Oromia is called Finfinnee.

## Language

The Oromo people speak Afaan Oromo. They belong to the Cushitic-speaking group of Eastern Africa. The Oromo language is the 4th most spoken language in the continent of Africa.

## Religion

The Oromo people practice three main religions: Waaqeffannaa, Islam and Christianity.

## History

Since the late 19th century, the Oromo have been under colonization by successive Ethiopian governments. Assisted by European colonial powers with modern weaponry, 10 million to 5 million Oromos were killed

during 1870 until 1900s. Since the forced incorporation of Oromia as part of present day 'Ethiopian' empire, the language and culture of the Oromo people was banned by the government and punishable as a crime, until 1991.

## Oromo movements

Oromo attempts to preserve the Oromo culture and language exist despite open attempts at Oromo ethnic cleansing.

Notable Oromo movements, particularly in the 1960's include the Oromo Raayya revolt, the Caalanqo and Aanoole Wars and The Afran Qalloo movements. Other Oromo groups and movements include the Maccaa Tuulama Association, the birth of the Oromo Liberation Front, the Oromo Student movements in 2005 and in 2014.

## Gadaa System

The Oromo people live by a democratic and egalitarian political system, called the Gadaa system. The Gadaa system consists of Gadaa grades; these grades have individual titles and responsibilities and are also grouped in 8 year periods. Each Gadaa title teaches the young male from birth to develop skills and knowledge about culture, governance, family values and leadership qualities. At the age of 40, Oromo men can be elected as Gadaa officials.

## Siinqee Institution

Siinqee is one of the pillars of Gadaa, an indigenous system of thought and practice which forms the foundations of Oromo society. As the bride steps out of the door of her mother's house, she would be handed the Siinqee (a traditional and sacred Oromo stick) by her mother. She walks, imbued with the majesty of Siinqee, shoulder to shoulder with her bridegroom, who carries a spear.

The role of Siinqee in Oromo society is to keep the peace and moral sanctity of the society. Most importantly, when in justice is committed, the women in the vicinity would come out in the morning hours bearing their Siinqee and baring their hairs.

## Coffee

Coffee was first found in Oromia, in the city of Kaffa, South Western Oromia. Oromo people began using coffee for nutritional use in the beginning of the 5th century.

## Athletics

The Oromo people have some of the fastest athletes in the world. These athletes include Abbabba Biqilaa who ran barefoot at the 1960 Summer Olympics. Other famous Oromo athletes include Derartu Tulu, Fatuma Roba, Kenenisa Bekele, Tirunesh Dibaba and many others.

## Economy

Potentially, Oromia is one of the richest countries in Africa. Agriculture is the backbone of its economy. Still employing archaic methods, subsistence agriculture is the means of livelihood for more than 90 per cent of the population. There are a variety of farm animals and crop plants.

The Cushitic speaking communities of this region perhaps Nubians are credited with the domestication of donkey and were the first to breed mules, (a result of a cross between a donkey and a mare). The Oromo are expert in animal husbandry through their long tradition as herdsmen

## What Do Oromo want?

The Oromo struggle is to regain their sovereignty & live in free and independent Oromia like South Sudan and Eritrea. The aspiration of the people to regain their fundamental freedom is in line with the principle enshrined in the charter of the UNO. The Oromo people are committed to the noble cause of laying a foundation for union of free peoples on the basis of their freely expressed will.

For more Information Visit

[www.omocommunity.org.au](http://www.omocommunity.org.au)

<http://oromoprotests.com/>

<http://gadaa.com/>

<http://ayyaantuu.com/>

[www.omovoice.org](http://www.omovoice.org)