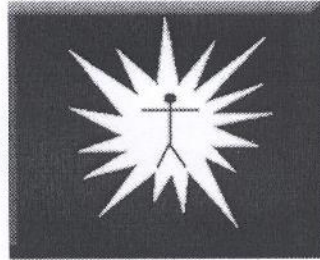


# Human Rights Council



HRCO

## 141<sup>st</sup> Special Report

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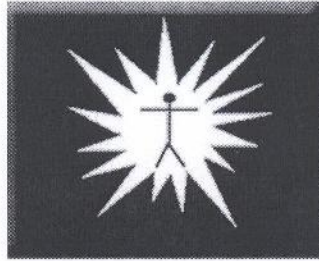
**Stop the Violation of the  
Human Rights of Citizens  
Voicing Identity-related Demands!**

June 1, 2016

Addis Ababa  
Ethiopia



Registration No. 1146  
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## HRCO

### **Head Office: Addis Ababa / Ethiopia**

Adjacent to Addis Ababa Stadium, on the main way to Mexico Square and Legehar (Rail way station), next to Lalibela Restaurant, Sahle Sellassie Building, 8th Floor, Room #19)

Phone: (+251) 011 551-7704

Fax: (+251) 011 551-7704

E-mail: [info@ehrc.org](mailto:info@ehrc.org)

Website: [www.ehrc.org](http://www.ehrc.org)

### **Human Rights Monitoring & Investigation Department**

Phone: (+251) 011 551-4489

E-mail: [complaints@ehrc.org](mailto:complaints@ehrc.org)

P.O. Box 2432

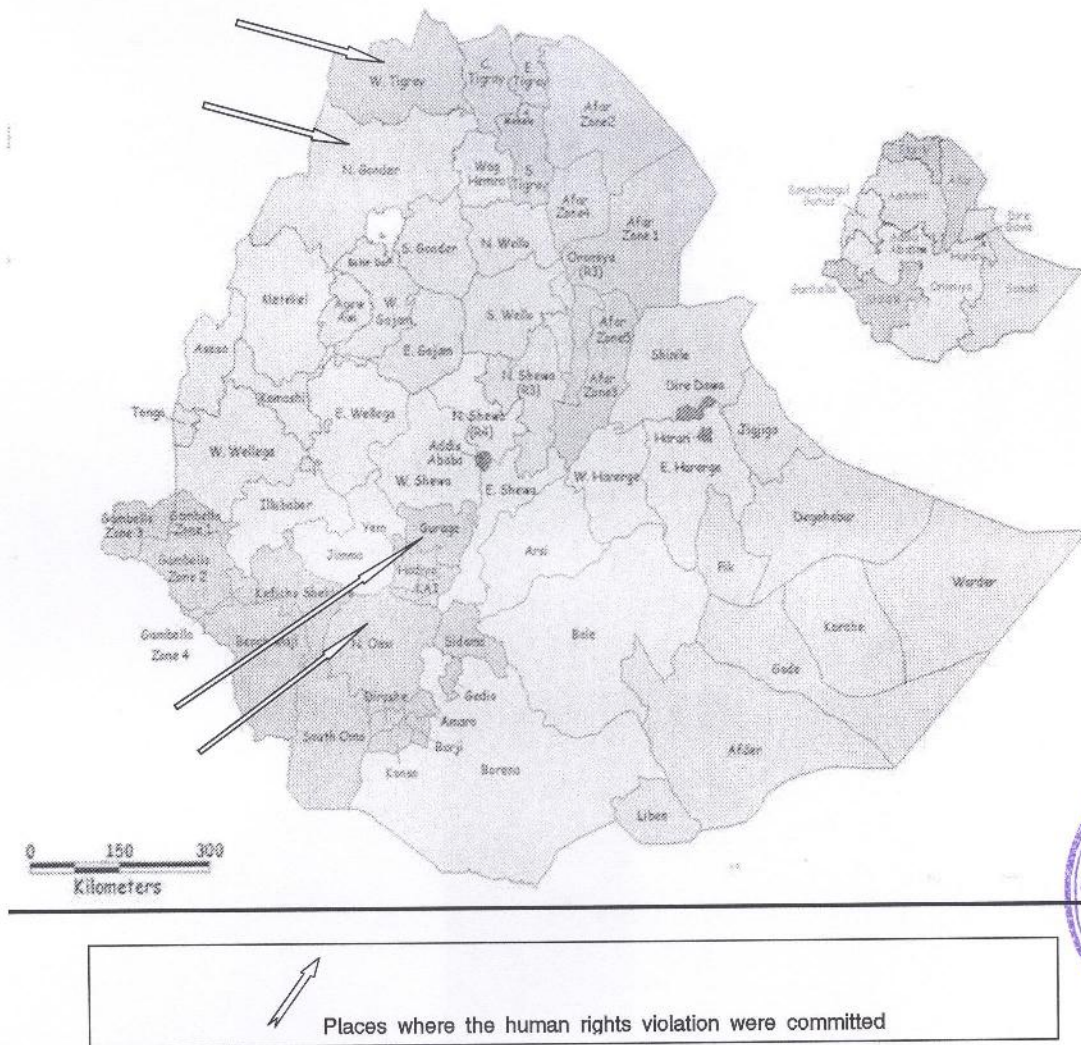
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## Administrative Regions and Zones of Ethiopia



### Introduction

In Ethiopia, basic human rights that have received constitutional recognition have been violated on various pretexts. The violations of rights due to demands for recognition of nationality identity made since the issuance of the 1995 FDRE Constitution can be cited as cases of such constitutional infringements. Following identity-related demands by the Wolqayt community, Qimant community, Qutch community, Kontoma community, Wolenie community, Dorzie community, and Siltie community, for instance, various human rights violations have been committed. While the demand of the Siltie community has been met, the others have either been addressed partially or not addressed at all.

In this 141<sup>st</sup> Special Report, the Human Rights Council (HRC) presents the findings of its on-site investigation into the loss of human lives, bodily injury, illegal detention, destruction of property and various social crises that resulted from the clashes following the identity-related demands of members of the Wolqayt

community living in Tigray National Regional State, the Qimant community living in Amhara National Regional State, and the Qutchu and Kontoma community living in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples National Regional State.

## **1. Human Rights Violations due to the Wolqayt Community's Demands for Recognition as Amharas**

### **Background**

The Wolqayt people have been making their demand to be recognized as Amharas at various times. Recently, 2,253 members of the Wolqayt community elected an 88-member Coordinating Committee who, on February 3, 2016, signed a petition informing the Human Rights Council the demands of their community. They also addressed their petition to the Office of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers, the Federal Police Commission, the Ministry of Justice, the Office of the E.P.R.D.F., the FDRE Ombudsman, and the FDRE Human Rights Commission.

Before presenting the human rights violations related to this demand, we will briefly introduce the geographic locality inhabited by the Wolqayt people, the history, culture, and current status of the community, based on the information provided to HRC investigators by the Community's representatives.

### **Geographic Location**

"Wolqayt used to be a woreda of Wogera Awraja in North Begemdir Province during the time of Emperor Haile Sellassie, and in Gondar Province during the time of the Derg. Currently, it has been incorporated into West Tigray Zone without the consent, and irrespective of the separate ethnic identity, of the people. We have lived as part of the Amhara people with whom we have close affinity historically, culturally, psychologically and geographically", explained the Wolqayt people's Coordinating Committee in their written statement to the HRC.

### **Borders**

The places bordering the woreda inhabited by the Wolqayt people are:

- In the north: Tekezie River/Eritrea
- In the south: Tsegedie
- In the east: Tekezie/Tigray
- In the west: Armatcheho and Sudan.

### **Language and Culture**

"The Wolqayt people are Ethiopian Amharas, and they have their own Amharic dialect; they also speak Tigrigna, and Sudanese Arabic in neighboring areas. Their cultural dances, songs, dirges, war songs, proverbs, and religious ceremonies are conducted in Amharic. The Tigrigna spoken by the people here decreases as one moves away from areas bordering Tigray and Eritrea. The only thing in common



with the people of Tigray is to some extent the language, but even then the dialects of Tigrigna spoken in Wolqayt and in Tigray are not the same. Otherwise, as far as our nationality is concerned, there is little similarity between us and them in culture, history, psychological make-up and geography, i.e., all the factors used to determine ethnic identity.”

### **Economic Livelihood**

“The livelihood of most of the people of Wolqayt is based on agriculture. They are a people who have withstood the ravages of malaria, the attacks of wild beasts such as lions and leopards, and the bites of snakes and wasps, and cultivated famous agricultural lands such as Megeza Wolqayt and Humera. They once engaged in mechanized agriculture, using as many as 1,500 tractors, and produced cotton, sesame, sorghum in large quantities. Although its woreda has not got the opportunity to develop, members of the community have migrated and introduced mechanized farming to other regions of Ethiopia.”

According to the elders, the Wolqayt people began voicing their demand for recognition of their Amhara identity as far back as 1991, when the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) took control of the area during its armed struggle, and this demand has not been addressed since then in accordance with the Constitution.

### **Human Rights Violations Reported by Wolqayt Community Representatives**

The members of the Wolqayt community, the elders, and the Coordinating Committee’s petition to the HRC<sup>1</sup>, have reported the following human rights violations:

- Preventing their children from learning in their own language and forcing them to learn in Tigrigna;
- Forcing members of their community to use the Tigrigna language in all public offices;
- Pressuring them to practice Tigray’s customs;
- Replacing the traditional names of the woreda, local towns, villages, rivers, springs, hills and ridges, with Tigrigna names;

The composition of workers in public offices in Tigray is 5% Wolqayte and 95% Tigrawi; even then the Wolqayt natives don’t enjoy equal opportunities and authority;

Some local TPLF officials have detained Wolqayt men and raped their wives and daughters;



<sup>1</sup> Due to challenges in the prevailing security situation, the political climate in the woreda and the HRC’s capacity limitation, the HRC was not able to visit the site and verify from the victims themselves **some of** the claims of violation reported in the Committee’s petition and by some of the witnesses.

- They are not allowed to freely express themselves at public gatherings, and if they do, they are branded as supporters of the old regime and either detained or humiliated;
- Those who declared themselves to be Wolqayte, rather than Tigraywi, are detained and their property and land given to Tigrawis, thereby impoverishing the Wolqayte and unfairly enriching some selected Tigrawis;
- The land cultivated by the Wolqayte for ages has been taken away and given to the Tigrawi agricultural organization, and those Wolqayt farmers who lost their land were forced to migrate to Soroqa, Abrahajira, Abderafi, Metema, Sheheda, and Qwara in Amhara Region, Benishangul-Gumuz Region and Gambella Region. However, those Tigrawi who have economic ties to local officials and came to the area through resettlement are given from 50 to 100 or even more hectares of land; the Wolqayte are thus being discriminated against.
- While the rest of Tigray now has dry weather roads linking Woredas to Kebeles, Wolqayt does not have proper roads linking even Woredas with Woredas;
- Due to maternity-related complications, many mothers and children are suffering from health problems; the health services are geared to benefit the Tigrawi in particular;
- While people in many areas of Tigray are beneficiaries of potable water, in Wolqayt, however, animals and humans are using the same water source. While those recently resettled Tigrawis are getting piped water, the indigenous Wolqayt community are not provided even with wells;
- Wolqayt does not have a college;
- Over 300 members of the Wolqayt community who refused to be incorporated into Tigray Region have been taken away from their homes at night and forced to disappear.

### **The Petition of the Wolqayt Representatives**

In their petitions, the representatives of the Wolqayt community have demanded that:

- Their community's peaceful and democratic aspirations for justice should be addressed through legal means;
- Their constitutional rights should be respected;
- They should be allowed to hold peaceful discussions with their community members;
- The representatives of the people should be given legal protection from any harm, including for themselves, their property and their families.



The representatives say that the response they received from the authorities is: "Whether you like it or not, the land belongs to Tigray. You can leave the land and go to the Amhara Region." They also reported that those who made such demands were branded as "remnants of the Derg regime, and lackeys of Semayawi Party, Ginbot 7 and Shaabiya", and humiliated.

### Areas Covered by the HRC Investigation

HRC staff investigated the violations of rights arising from the demands for recognition of the Wolqayt's Amhara identity and self-determination in Wolqayt, Soroqa, Gonder and some other places.

### Sources of Information and Methods of Investigation

The main sources of information were the victims of violations, families of victims, eyewitnesses, and representatives of the community. Repeated attempts to contact local officials of Tigray Region and the West Tigray Zone have failed. The investigators also checked relevant documents before and after the visit to the sites.

### Challenges Encountered during the Investigation

The prevalent political tension in the country, the risks involved in conducting investigations in conflict areas such as Wolqayt, surveillance by government security forces, and the financial constraints faced by the HRC were the main challenges encountered.

## Human Rights Violations Arising from the Demand for Recognition of Amhara Identity

### Extra-judicial Killing

The following people were illegally killed for peacefully opposing the incorporation of Wolqayt into Tigray. The violation was committed by local TPLF officials and armed men, and security forces of Tigray Regional State.

Table 1. Victims of extra-judicial killing

S/N	Name	Place	S/N	Name	Place
1	Yibeyin Tegegne	Wof Argif Adgasegne	10	Adisey Tejie	Wof Argif
2	Ferede Zeriya	Kolitano Tabya	11	Tgegne Nega	Kolitay Tabya
3	Mihret Gebitew	Kolitano	12	Gebre-medhin Zerfu	Blanba
4	Arefayne Mekonnen	Dengocha	13	Mamay Belay	Adigaba
5	Belete Tesfay/priest	Wof Argif	14	Araya Mengistu	Kolitay
6	Gebremariam Zeleke	Kolitano Tabya	15	Endalkachew Teju	Wof Argif
7	Merid Afterari	Wof Argif	16	Iyasu Alene	>>
8	Alene Birara	>>	17	Nega Asresie	Adigaba
9	Adanew Riste	>>	18	Wolde (Grazmach)	>>



S/N	Name	Place	S/N	Name	Place
19	Tedla Tiruneh	Qafity Woreda	27	Fetene Gebrie	>>
20	Atnafigne Alemayehu	Balamaba Kebele	28	Merid Geberemichael	Wolqayt Kuleta
21	Lijalem Taye	Bombiya	29	Gebrie Geshuneh	>>
22	Yalmeeshet	>>	30	Atalay Alem	>>
23	Dejen Mamo	Koken Mariam	31	Qegnash Wolde	>>
24	Bahta Demisew	Wof Argif	32	Gifachew Dagne	>>
25	Angaw Menber (died in jail)	Dansha	33	Negussie Yehuwala	Qafta
26	Negussie Menber	>>	34	Riste Girmay Tesfay	Maykadra

## Forced Disappearance

Table 2. Persons who have disappeared

S/N	Name	S/N	S/N	Name	S/N	Name	
1	Berie Addisu	24	Eniyew Awhara	47	Sefi Sisay	70	Rittbey Atsebiha
2	Jotew Tamiru	25	Endeshaw Tafere	48	Serebe Beyene	71	Tedla Haile
3	Sisay Tesfahune	26	Wagnew Abatalew	49	Weldeqes Ya'ebiyew	72	Lemlemu Ferede
4	Bayew biyadgigne	27	Alem Baye	50	Beyene Ayaligne	73	Mihretey Abebe
5	Atalay Zenebe	28	Ayalew Semu	51	Gebresellassie Reda	74	Nigatu Terfay
6	Sisay Zenebe	29	Abreha Nega	52	Hafte Yirga	75	Teklay Lijalem
7	Gebremedhin Yehuwala	30	Goitom Haresa	53	Dirar Gesese	76	Abebe Tefera
8	Mamo Zewdie	31	Habtu Yirga	54	Lilay Hadgu	77	Damte Takele
9	Malede Nega	32	Desta Lijalem	55	Risqey Haile	78	Tegegne Belay
10	Goshu Haile	33	Yazezew Laqew	56	Asamene Atalay	79	Enyew Wubneh
11	Alabel Haile	34	Yigzaw Zegeye	57	Tebeje Bekele	80	Nega Tebeje
12	Wogahtay Gebresellassie	35	Mulaw Kassahun	58	Hayelom Yirga	81	Yirsaw Zewdie
13	Hafte Zenebe	36	Tsehaye Wolde	59	Gerie Reda	82	Tefera Lilay
14	Adane Tadese	37	Berhe Hagos	60	Ayalew Semu	83	Getu Telay
15	Mamu Desta	38	Alebachew Mebratu	61	Fantu Sisay	84	Worku Aytegeb
16	Meshesha Mola	39	Goitom Hadgu	62	Tekaligne Tesfaye	85	Ferede Tsehay
17	Ayahuney Wondechewal	40	Hailu Liyneh	63	Hagos Atalay	86	Alemaw Zenebe
18	Dereje Angaw	41	Alebachew Defersha	64	Alehegne	87	Tekaligne Tsegay
19	Alehegne Tsegayesus	42	Gebrehet Bahta	65	Tekle Lijalem	88	Aleqa Baye
20	Wendim Haile	43	Shitey Ayalneh	66	Fantahun Gebeyehu	89	Leul Mesfin
21	Imiyew Awhara	44	Male Zenebe	67	Ferede Zeray	90	Yesaw Zewdie
22	Asmamaw Belete	45	Fantu Tegegne	68	Inkwayne Tesfa		
23	Aweqe Tikuh	46	Chalu Workneh	69	Alemu Legese		

### The Case of Ato Lilay Berhane Beyene's Disappearance

The 39-year-old trader is a member of the Wolqayt People's Amhara Identity Demand Coordination Committee. He is a well-known figure who, together with other committee and Wolqayt community members, has been promoting the cause of Amhara identity with Woreda, Regional and Federal authorities. On March 15, 2016, while he was travelling from Gondar to Humera, he was forced to get off the public bus near Maydeloat at about 8.00 p.m. and taken away by security men. The driver of the bus he was travelling in, together with his assistant the ticket man, were detained for two months and beaten because they testified at court Ato Lilay's abduction.





The people of Wolqayt staged a protest march on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2016 in Dansha town, opposing the abduction of Ato Lilay for voicing a legitimate demand and demanding that either his whereabouts be disclosed or that he be brought to court if he is accused of committing any offence. As the people's demand persisted, he was eventually brought to court in Humera Woreda on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016.. Although the Humera High Court set him free, he was still held in detention at Humera prison at the time this report was being prepared.

### **Beatings and Torture**

Article 16 of the FDRE Constitution provides, "Everyone has the right to protection against bodily harm". In addition, Article 14 declares, "Everyone has the inviolable and inalienable right to life, the security of person and liberty". Contrary to these constitutional provisions, however, the following individuals have been subjected to beatings and torture.

1. **Ato Leul Nega:** He is a 40-year old resident of Adremett Woreda in Wolqayt. On August 15, 2005, he was staying at the Adremett Hotel when he was hit with the butt of a pistol and also shot on the nose by the chief of the Adremett Police Station, saying that the hotel was not for a Wolqayte. Ato Leul's nose was broken and he had to take medical treatment for a long time. To date, the assailant police chief has not been brought to justice.
2. **Ato Tadese Gotitom:** Aged 30, he was a married man with two children. In March 2015, he was taken from his home in Adi Goshu at nine o'clock in the evening and thrown into jail in Axum town, accused of leading the Wolqayt movement. On 7<sup>th</sup> April, he was severely beaten by the prison guards. After five months, he was released by the court.
3. **Ato Mebratu Takele:** Aged 48; on January 21, he was staying at the Qaptiya Kebele Hotel when at seven o'clock in the evening, he was hit on the nose with a glass by the chairman of the Qaptiya Kebele and his nose was broken; the Deputy Chairman and the local militia commander also beat him. They threatened to eliminate him just like his uncle's son unless he stopped supporting the Wolqayt demand.

### **Illegal Detention**

Article 17 (1) of the FDRE Constitution guarantees that "no one shall be deprived of his or her liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law". Article 19 (3) provides for the right of an accused person to be brought before a court of law within 48 hours of arrest. The following persons have been held in detention in violation of these constitutional provisions.



Table 3. Illegally detained persons

S/N	Name	Date Detained	Place	Remarks
1	Bayew Kahsay	23/02/16	Humera	
2	Goitom Amare	27/02/16	>>	
3	Goitom Risqey	9/03/16	>>	
4	Aligaz Ayele	21/03/16	>>	
5	Mola Hailu	>>	>>	
6	Ashagrew Gezahegne	>>	>>	
7	Setegne Arero	>>	>>	
8	Solomon Gizatie	>>	>>	
9	Mamaye Dessalegne	>>	>>	
10	Bahta Teju	29/03/16	>>	
11	Tadese Goitom	>>	Axum	Set free by the court after a six-month detention
12	Leulay Nega	20/09/05	Adiremetse	Detained for two days and set free
13	Negussie Demisew	8/08/06	Gondar	Set free by the court after a nine-month detention
14	Bayew Kassa	February 2016	Dansha	Taken away by armed militia and now held at Humera Police Station

### Confiscation of Farmland, Residential House and Other Property

Article 40 (1) of the FDRE Constitution provides that: "Every Ethiopian citizen has the right to the ownership of private property." Likewise, Article 40 (4) provides that: "Ethiopian peasants have the right to obtain land without payment and the protection against eviction from their possession". Contrary to these provisions, the following Wolqayt farmers and others whose names are not listed here have had their farmlands, farm machinery and their farm produce, taken away, partially or wholly, by local officials. Local farmers and members of the Coordinating Committee have reported to the HRC that this illegal action has continued to this date.

1. **Ato Kassa Yirgaw:** Aged 50 and a resident of Kebele 01 in Humera, he is head of his family and makes his living by farming. Since his childhood, he has been working for fifty years on 700 ha of land, which he inherited from his father. On 28/01/2003, his land was confiscated without being given any notice or replacement or compensation. He reported to HRC that after much litigation, he was given back just 100 ha of his land, but got no justice yet. He says that he lost his land simply because he was a Wolqayte.
2. **Ato Yilef Beyene:** Aged 28, he reported to HRC that 250 ha of farmland in Maykadra, Dika Tabya, Qaptiya Woreda, which belonged to his family, was illegally taken away without any compensation and given to some Tigrawis. He also reported to HRC that in 1993, over 200 heads of cattle belonging to his father, Beyene Tiruneh, and his uncle, Tedla Tiruneh, were wrestled by TPLF armed men and taken to Tigray. Ato Yilef believes that his property was confiscated simply because he is a Wolqayte and supported the demand for recognition of their Amhara identity. Ato Tedla was killed because of his support for this demand (see no. 19 in Table 1).



3. **Ato Risqay Ademe:** Aged 40 and father of three children, he lives in Maykadra Kebele, Qafta Woreda. In December 2010, 30 ha of his farmland were taken away from him by a former TPLF captain. 126 quintals of sorghum was also taken away from him. He reported that he was forced to flee his place of residence and made to face hardship simply because he is a Wolqayte.
4. **Ato Sisay Zenebe:** on July 18, 1980, 18 of his cattle and his gun were taken away at night. He was abducted by TPLF armed men and his whereabouts is unknown up to now (see no. 6 in Table 2).
5. **Ato Berley Tebeje:** Age 65, a resident of Qafti Adder Ba'eker, 30 ha of his farmland was confiscated by local officials. He reported to HRC that he was detained for four days when he tried to have his land reinstated to him in June 2013.
6. **Ato Adem Ali:** A 66-year-old farmer living in Humera Kebele 01; he used to be a well-known wealthy farmer. But his farmland, modern farm machinery and agricultural produce were taken away from him at different times by local officials. He was under constant pressure not to take his produce to the market. He reported that because of the injustice and discrimination meted out to him, his children fled the country. He says that he lives in fear for his life because he was threatened with death unless he renounced his Amhara identity.
7. **Ato Nuru Ibrahim:** He is a 55-year-old farmer supporting a family of 25. In January 2008, he was dispossessed of 100 ha of his farmland simply because of his support for the Wolqayte people's demand; his land was distributed to people who resettled from Tigray. His tractor was also confiscated by a local official. He reported that he was forced to leave behind his wife and children and flee his home, seeking refuge at another place.
8. **Ato Ashagir Zewdie:** A resident of Qaftiya Humera, he makes his livelihood as a farmer. He reported to HRC that he was dispossessed of his tractor and gun simply because he was a Wolqayte.
9. **Ato Gebre Tegegne:** witnesses reported to HRC that in 2015, 50 ha of his farmland was confiscated and given to a Tigrawi from Axum.
10. **Ato Chalachew Haile:** A 60-year-old resident of Shehedi town in Metema Woreda; on November 15, 1990, a local commander of TPLF took away from him 151 heads of cattle and 92 goats. The Commander was later transferred to the Azezo division of the Army in Gondar. Although he got support letters from the North Gondar Administrative Zone and Metema Woreda Council for the return of his livestock, his attempts to get them back proved futile.
11. **Ato Tesema Reta:** A 68-year-old resident of Humera cultivating 70 ha of land and member of the Coordinating Committee. Due to his membership of the Committee, he was unjustly ordered to pay 980,000 birr in land tax for 130 ha of land though he never had this much land. His appeals failed to produce any reduction. He reported that he was forced to flee the land for fear of his life.



## Farmers Who Have Been Disarmed

The following people were disarmed because of their support for the Amhara identity of the Wolqayt People.

S/N	Name	Place	Date Disarmed
1	Abay Remett	Adiremett	21/02/2016
2	Yebirrshum Abere	>>	3/02/2016 (because he played an Amharic song in his hotel)
3	Mekete Mebratu	Dansha	01/03/2016
4	Berhanu Ferede	>>	>>
5	Ahmed Mohammed Nur	>>	>>
6	Anagaw Tiruneh	>>	>>
7	Yirga Azanaw	>>	>>
8	Gorefey Asgedom	Ba'eker	20/01/2016
9	Tsegay Wubneh	Qaptiya	January 2016

Witnesses have reported to HRC that other people were summoned to a meeting and told that they do not deserve to be armed as they were supporters of the Wolqayte's Amhara identity. Accordingly, they were made to hand over their arms in January and February 2016.

## Displaced Persons

Due to their demand for recognition of the Amhara identity of the Wolqayt people, the following are among those people that have been obliged to flee from Wolqayt Tsegedie, since March 21, 2016, for fear of their lives (Table 4). Until the time of compiling this report, some of these people were still at their places of refuge while some others were forced by the hardship they encountered to return to their places of residence. These dislocations were confirmed by the HRC investigators and by members of the Coordinating Committee.

Table 4. Persons dislocated

S/N	Name	S/N	Name	S/N	Name	S/N	Name
1	Wondmey Goitom	14	Alhegne Achamyeleh	27	Tsegaye Habte	40	Alcaba Berhane
2	Mulu Adugna	15	Serebe Mulu	28	Berhanu Ferede	41	Fetalew Mamo
3	Yenhun Berihun	16	Sefefe Ksasse	29	Dagnew Tsegahun	42	Fesiha Demoz
4	Tigabu Berihun	17	Babey Nega	30	Gebre Abebe	43	Yideg Agizew
5	Shimuye	18	Gidey Assefa	31	Gwanche Mamay	44	Mekete Mebratu
6	Jejaw Berihun	19	Yegnaw Lij Eshet	32	Berhane Yaabyo	45	Eshetu Adisu
7	Dagnew Tcheqlu	20	Mekonnen Yazenew	33	Yenhun Baye	46	Firew Amsalu
8	Kassahun Eshetie	21	Melaku Chekol	34	Ambachew Brie	47	Tsegaye Worqu (Aleqa)
9	Eshetie Adisu	22	Kassa Tiru	35	Bahere Berra	48	Yizezew Malede
10	Shibabaw Asmare	23	Babu Legese	36	Alu Mamo (Mrs.)	49	Lijalem Kebede
11	Tilanesh Mebratu (Miss)	24	Aluba Tekle	37	Mulaw Yismaw	50	Bahta Wagnaw
12	Markeshaw Aynekulu	25	Tsegaye Agidew	38	Worqneh Berhane	51	Mulu Mesfin
13	Abate Adisu	26	Tsega Feleke	39	Gizachew Berhane	52	Shibabaw Wolde



S/N	Name	S/N	Name	S/N	Name	S/N	Name
53	Mengiste Fentie	74	Gashaw Tilahun	95	Endalyew Baye (Priest)	116	Mamo Adane
54	Abate Adisu	75	Berhanu Adisu	96	Yordanos Mesfin	117	Tsegaye Sisay
55	Seyoum Berihun	76	Shebelaw Malede	97	Maru Berhane	118	Alachew Gebregiworgis
56	Atalay Tadege	77	Mesfin Qagnew	98	Sisay Ayele	119	Sisay Dagnew
57	Taye Mesele	78	Tsegaye Worqu	99	Gidey Assefa	120	Mulu Negussie
58	Fetene Gebriye	79	Mekuria Azanaw/Deacon	100	Fisseha Desta	121	Muluberhan Negussie
59	Tsegahun Melese	80	Mamay Fekadu	101	Fitalew Mamay	122	Tsegay Wubneh Wondattir
60	Abebaw Kasahun	81	Chalachew Tsehay	102	Gizachew Ayele	123	Zewdu Gebregziabher
61	Gosh Tiruneh	82	Setegne Mamay	103	Mekete Mebratu	124	Mengistu Endalew
62	Gu'ay Nigus	83	Tigabu Berihun	104	Efrem Amsalu	125	Tesfay Mewsha Hagos
63	Chale Gebeyaw	84	Mera Belay	105	Mebratu Alemu	126	Abreha Mebratu
64	Eneney Abderqadir	85	Haile Yirga	106	Dejene Lemlemu	127	Ademha Ji'ali
65	Meseret Demilew	86	Mebratu Amare	107	Le'elt Chekol (Mrs.)	128	Mebratu Getahun
66	Mare Belay	87	Mekonnen Desta	108	Endeshaw Angaw	129	Nega Yenehun
67	Dessie Ayichew	88	Yeshifana Azeze	109	Angaw Mamu	130	Mesfin Asmare
68	Yinager Dessie	89	Isayas Malede	110	Awoqe Zenebe	131	Kassegne Lemma
69	Awoqe Zenebe	90	Baye Negusse	111	Berrie Wondimagegne	132	Nega Bantihun
70	(Ato) Shambel Abebe	91	Leul Rezeme	112	Mola Abebe	133	Tesema Reta Tekola
71	Temesgen Berihun	92	Yilef Beyene	113	Teju Gobezie	134	Gidey Asmare
72	(Ato) Shambel Atalay	93	Semachew Wagnew	114	Ayewew Atalay	135	Shehay Gebrecherqos
73	Mola Mebratu	94	Sisay Tilahun	115	Tigabey Bayew	136	Tesfahun Haile

### Change of Place Names

According to the information provided to the HRC by members of the local community, elders and members of the Coordinating Committee, among the efforts to destroy the historical and ethnic identity of the Wolqayt people is the replacement of traditional place names by new ones. Examples of such changes are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Place names changed

S/N	Previous names	New names
1.	Kibabo	Hiwote
2.	Imbagala	Ahforum/Maichew
3.	Woynat	Dedbit Lekatit/Divizyon
4.	Shumeri	Selam
5.	Maylele	Hailom
6.	Lilab	Alem Genet
7.	Maksegno Gebeya	Ketema Negus
8.	Kurba Lomi	Naylomi
9.	Dishqa	Selam
10.	Giyitt	Maywoyni
11.	Menshel	Mayleham
12.	Banat	Hiywot Irsha Mechanization



## **B. Human Rights Violations Related to the Issue of the Identity of the Qimant People**

The Human Rights Council (HRC) has made on-site investigations of the violations emanating from the clashes due to the demand of the Qimant people for the recognition of their separate ethnic identity, and presents the results as follows.

According to the reports received by HRC from members of the Qimant people's Coordinating Committee and other witnesses, the demand for recognition of their identity was presented to the Amhara Regional State Council a long time ago. Not satisfied with the response of the Regional Council in 2013, the Qimant representatives submitted their petition to the Federal House of Federation on September 23, 2013. On March 9, 2015, the Amhara Regional Council decided that the Qimant community in only 42 Kebeles located in 2 Woredas can set up their own local administration. This decision was contrary to the demand for Qimant self-determination in 126 Kebeles located in 8 Woredas. This resolution of the Council was rejected by the Qimant people.

On June 14, 2015, Qimant community members in Aykel town got a permit from local authorities to hold a protest march; but while the youth were making calls for the march they were ordered by the local police to stop their calls. This led to arguments in the midst of which the Region's special forces and the local police shot dead 7 persons and wounded another 7, according to what the representatives and eyewitnesses reported to the HRC.

On December 8, 2015, a group of people, including armed men amidst them, staged a demonstration in Shinfa Kebele of Genda Wuha Woreda. They carried slogans demanding that the Federal Constitution be revised, Article 39 be struck out, and endorsing the Amhara Regional Council's resolution, but opposing the House of Federation's resolution. This was followed by arson attacks on the homes of several members of the Qimant community in the Kebele. Members of the Coordinating Committee and eyewitnesses reported to the HRC that in the clashes that occurred from December 8-14, 2015, there were gunfire exchanges and arson attacks on homes, crops and granaries in several Kebeles.

### **Extra-judicial Killing**

In a crackdown against Qimant members, the Amhara Region's security forces and armed militia shot and killed several people in Lay-Armatcheho on November 2, 2015.



Table 6. Illegally killed persons<sup>2</sup>

S/N	Victims	Sex	Age	Kebele	Occupation
1.	Destaw Tchaqle Dubale	M	40	Tchanqya	Teacher
2.	Mande Mare Arage	M	32	Midrar	9 <sup>th</sup> grade student
3.	Endalk Eshetie Wendie	M	25	>>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade student
4.	Derso Tchanie Tegen	M	30	Tchanqya	Farmer
5.	Aytegeb Adane Mekuria	M	20	>>	12 <sup>th</sup> grade student
6.	Tagele Gubena Sharew	M	56	Woynoch	Farmer
7.	Getahun Tsehay Woldekidan	M	44	>>	Farmer
8.	Amare Sertse Kebede	M	43	>>	Farmer
9.	Getachew Mire Kebede	M	17	>>	Student
10.	Alebel Angaji Laqew	M	42	Tikil Dingay	Wood worker
11.	Mola Yigzaw Negussie	M	70	Birlaho	Farmer
12.	Mheretu Teshe Filate	M	35	Mawra	Farmer
13.	Tashu Zemene Alebachew	M	47	>>	Farmer
14.	Abebe Derese Ayalew	M	15	>>	Student
15.	Yismaw Mekashaw Tegenu	M	57	>>	Farmer
16.	Ayalnesh Mare Ayalew	F	13	>>	Student
17.	Mihret Takele Asfaw	M	52	>>	Guard
18.	Eneyish Abitew Teyima	F	47	>>	House wife
19.	Meku Derso Tesfaye	M	28	Gonderoch Mariam	Student
20.	Alefe Mane Abitew	M	16	>>	Student
21.	Tchomaye Demissie Tasew	M	38	>>	Farmer
22.	Teju Demisie Tasew	M	38	>>	Farmer

Table 7. Wounded persons<sup>3</sup>

S/N	Name	Sex	Age	Kebele	Occupation	Injury
1	Gebey Settu Chekol	M	-	Mawra	Farmer	On the hand
2	Ferede Abate	M	-	Tchila Dewel	Farmer	>>
3	Adise Negusie Teka	M	-	Mawra	Farmer	On the belly
4	Mare Ayalew	M	-	Mawra	Farmer	On the hand
5	Desie Demisie Tasew	M	-	Gonderoch Mariam	Farmer	---
6	Qenaw Berhanu Dinqe	M	40	Tchanqya	Farmer	On the hand and foot
7	Alqadir Bizuneh	M	60	Woynoch	Farmer	On the hand
8	Maleda Asmare Alene	M	60	Barlaho	Farmer	On the lap
9	Gebeyehu Tiruneh Zelie	M	45	Midraro	Farmer	On the foot
10	Lingerew Andarge Tefera	M	28	Barlaho	Farmer	On the hand

### Damage to Property

The Committee and other witnesses reported to HRC that the Qimant people in various woredas suffered serious human rights violations. Their houses, property and crops were burnt, their livestock plundered and killed. The Coordinating

<sup>2</sup> According to the Coordinating Committee, the number those killed is 74.

<sup>3</sup> The Committee reported that 39 persons were wounded and 36 disappeared.



Committee's estimation of damage to property destroyed and/ or plundered is as follows:

1. Qwara Woreda: -----	6,234,122 Birr
2. Metema Woreda: -----	81,667,294 Birr
3. Tchilga Woreda:-----	58,816,760 Birr
4. Tach Armatcheho, Mala Kidanemihret: <u>1,744,000 Birr</u>	

**Total: 148,462,176 Birr**

### **Physical Assault and Assassination Attempt**

Members of the Coordinating Committee reported to the HRC that, on March 21, 2016, there was an assassination attempt on the following members and three other persons when they were beaten severely while going home from work in Tikil Dingay town in Lay Armatcheho:

1. Tsegaye Mitiku
2. Degu Genet
3. Kindu Assefa
4. Mazengia Laqew.

On March 25, 2016, after 11 o'clock at night, there was heavy gunfire by the Region's special forces and hand grenades were thrown, as a result of which W/ro Tedla Adane and Ato Salie Tesfahunegne were killed.





### **C. Human Rights Violations Related to the Qutcha Community's Identity-based Demands**

In the written petition submitted to the HRC on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2016 by the Coordinating Committee of the Qutcha people's demand for self-determination, 43 members of their community were detained at Arbaminch prison for voicing their demand, and have, to date, not been released. Furthermore, the killers of members of their community have not been brought to justice. Those who have shot and wounded more than 100 people have also not been brought to justice. Nor has compensation been paid to the victims. Several civil servants accused of raising Qutcha identity demands have been illegally laid off from their jobs, famers evicted from their land, students prevented from attending class, business persons barred from their trade. Their repeated demands have not been addressed and they have made their appeals to the Federal House of Federation. Though they were informed that the House of Federation has written to the Council of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR), the latter has not given them any response; nor were they given a copy of the letter from the House.

### **D. Human Rights Violations Following the Identity-based Demands of the Kontoma People**

The HRC had issued Special Reports (Nos. 33, 35, and 114), on the human rights violations suffered by the Kontama people in Mareqo Woreda, Gurage Zone, SNNPR, because of their demands for self-determination. The issue has not yet been resolved. The Community's representatives have reported to HRC that their petition to the House of Federation has not yet received a response.

### **Conclusion**

Article 39 (3) of the FDRE Constitution provides: "Every nation, nationality, and people in Ethiopia has the right to a full measure of self-government which includes the right to establish institutions of government in the territory that it inhabits and to equitable representation in state and Federal governments." Therefore, the Human Rights Council believes that any demands for self-determination in accordance with this constitutional provision should be addressed expeditiously and sustainably, with due regard to the constitution, based on an in-depth study of the situation, and through democratic consultations with all stakeholders.

Instead of opting for a violent response, the government should respect its own constitution, the African Human and People's Rights Charter and international human rights instruments, and protect the rights of its citizens.



## Recommendations

- The Human Rights Council rejects the government's violent response to the identity-related demands of the Wolqayt, Qimant, Qutcha and Kontoma communities.
- Those officials who engaged in or gave orders for the extra-judicial killing, forced disappearance, illegal detention, confiscation and/or plunder of the property of members of the Wolqayt, Qimant, Qutcha and Kontoma communities should be brought to justice;
- Members of the Wolqayt, Qimant, Qutcha and Kontoma communities who have been displaced because of their identity-related demand should be given guarantees for their safety and be enabled to return to their homes.
- The agricultural land, machinery and other property illegally confiscated from them should be returned to them;
- Compensation should be paid to the families of victims of extra-judicial killing;
- The families of victims of forced disappearance should be notified of the whereabouts of their loved ones, if the victims are alive, or the perpetrators brought to justice, if they are dead;
- The identity-related demands of the Wolqayt, Qimant, Qutcha and Kontoma communities are demands for respect of their constitutional rights; therefore, the human rights violations committed against them by Kebele, Woreda, Zonal, Regional and Federal authorities should be stopped immediately;
- The HRC calls on the House of Federation to give an expeditious, credible and just response to the identity-related demands based on the FDRE Constitution.

The Human Rights Council calls on all citizens, national and international organizations who stand for the respect of human rights to write to or call the following addresses and pressure the Government of Ethiopia to protect the human rights of its citizens.

- FDRE House of Peoples' Representative Speaker of the House Secretariat  
P.O.Box 80001; Email [national.parliament@telecom.net.et](mailto:national.parliament@telecom.net.et) ; Fax (+251)011 155-0400  
Tel. (+251) 011 124 -1000  
Addis Ababab, Ethiopia.
- FDRE House of Federation, Speaker of the House  
P.O.Box ; 20122/1000 Email [kumashih@gmail.com](mailto:kumashih@gmail.com)  
Fax ; (+251) 124-1208/011 124-2308  
Tel. (+251) 011 122-3322  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- FDRE office of the President  
P.O. Box 23698 Fax; (+251) 011 551-8656 Tel. (+251) 011 551-8186  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



- FDRE Office of the prime minister  
P.O.Box; 1031 Fax (+251) 011-1226292 Tel. (+251) 011-1241155  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- FDRE Ministry of federal affairs office  
P.O.Box; 5608 Email [mofatr1@yahoo.com](mailto:mofatr1@yahoo.com) Fax; (+251)011 551 -1200  
Tel. (+251) 011-515 3204  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- FDRE Ministry of Justice  
P.O.Box 1370 Email; [justabr@ethio.et.et](mailto:justabr@ethio.et.et) Fax; (+251) 011 551-7775  
Tel. (+251)011 551-3620  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- FDRE Office of the Ombudsman  
P.O.Box 2459 Email; [Ombudsmaneth@ethionet.et](mailto:Ombudsmaneth@ethionet.et) Fax; (+251) 011-5532073  
Tel. (+251) 011-553-2073  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- FDRE Human Rights Commission  
P.O.Box 1165 Email; [hrcom@ethionet.et](mailto:hrcom@ethionet.et) Fax (+251) 011-5504031  
Tel. (+251) 011 550-4031  
Addis Ababa. Ethiopia.
- FDRE Federal Police director general Office  
P.O.Box 199 Tel. (+251) 011-5512744  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Tigray Regional state President's Office  
P.O.Box 291 Fax: (+251) 034 441 6564 Tel. (+251)034 4416564  
Mekele, Ethiopia.
- Amhara regional State Office of the speaker of the house  
P.O.Box 1324 Fax; (+251)0582202511 Tel. (+251)058220-2659  
BahirDar, Ethiopia.
- Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples regional state, Speaker of the house  
P.O.Box 1546 Fax; (+251) 046220-2408 Tel. (+251) 046-2214778/0462205848  
Hawasa, Ethiopia.
- Oromiya Regional state office of the speaker of the house  
P.O.Box 101769 Email [oromiawiev@ethionet.et](mailto:oromiawiev@ethionet.et) Fax (+251)011 551-9633  
Tel. (+251)011 5524247  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Afar regional state president's Office  
Tel. (+251) 0336660056  
Semera, Ethiopia.
- Somali regional state office of the speaker of the house  
P.O.Box 392 Fax (+251)25 7753429  
Jigjiga, Ethiopia.
- Benshangul Gumuz regional state, speaker of the house  
P.O.Box 44 Fax; (+251)057775-0814 Tel. (+251)0557775-0109  
Asosa, Ethiopia.



- Gambela regional state, speaker of the house  
P.O.Box 25 Fax; (+251)046-2202408  
Gambela, Ethiopia.
- Harari regional state, house of the speaker  
P.O.Box 952 Fax; (+251)025-6662530 Tel. (+251)025-666-1723/025666-1746  
Harar, Ethiopia.



**HRCO Stands for Democracy the rule of law and the respect for  
human rights in Ethiopia.**