



MORESH WEGENIE AMARA ORGANIZATION

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To:

United Nations Security Council
Security Council Report
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From:

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Subject: Reference ‘SEMG S/2014/727’, 13 October 2014¹

1. Moresh Wegenie Amara Organization (MWAO) is a nonprofit civic organization, established to be the voice for the voiceless people of the Amara ethnic group in Ethiopia. The Amara are one of the 81 ethnic groups in Ethiopia, and account for about 35 percent of the total population of the country. MWAO has been registered in September 2012 as a 501(c) entity in the State of Maryland, USA. The Organization operates throughout the world, and has branch offices in Europe, Australia and Canada. This letter is written to file a formal complaint regarding the report ‘SEMG S/2014/727’ dated 13 October 2014. I would like to bring to your attention specifically to the content and implications of the text stated on page 31, paragraph 78, which states “**Ginbot Sebat is a banned opposition group formed in 2005 by Amhara political elites committed to regime change in Ethiopia through armed struggle.**” We are utterly baffled by the motive behind this false information and data contained in the SEMG report, which, we believe, has led to a wrong conclusion about the grave situation the Amaras are in Ethiopia. MWAO would like to take this opportunity to request the Committee and the UN Security Council to expunge this misleading reference to Amaras from its official records.

¹ Eritrea report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea submitted in accordance with resolution 2111 (2013), S/2014/727.

2. The ruling Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), or by its popular name Woyane, has clearly stated in its program that "... the Amara and imperialism are two of the staunch enemies of the people of Tigray." (TPLF Program, 1976 (1968 E.C.), page 18). Throughout TPLF's history of existence, 17 years as a rebel group in the bushes and 23 years on power, it has committed innumerable atrocities of genocide and ethnic cleansing against the Amaras. Their crimes against the Amaras are comparable to the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germans against the Jewish people. On the other hand, findings of the report and the conclusion drawn from it regarding the formation and leadership composition of G-7 is utterly false, harmful to the Amaras and, hence, undermines the credibility and integrity of the Committee and the Council. Furthermore, the report provides additional fodder to the TPLF that finds the Amaras inimical to its ethnic-minority absolute dominance of the political, economic, and social system since 1991. We are appalled, saddened and deeply worried by this report and the implication it will have on the Amara people. Thus, we believe, it is an unnecessary infringement by the Security Council Sanctions Committee, and the Security Council, on the God-given rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness of the Amara people.
3. The Popular Front for Justice and Democracy (PFDJ), formerly known as the Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF), is, from its inception, an anti-Ethiopia and anti-Amara organization. It is a well known fact that the PFDJ is one of the major actors for dismembering Ethiopia into Eritrea and the current *kilil* (Bantustan) Ethiopia in May 1991. In fact when PFDJ (EPLF) and TPLF made public their plan to disintegrate Ethiopia at the July 1991 Conference held in Addis Ababa, the only participant at the Conference who unequivocally opposed that historic error was the late leader of the Amara people, Professor Asrat Woldeyes. Hence, we believe that the Security Council has enough knowledge and evidence about the PFDJ, which is an arch historical enemy of the people of Ethiopia, and the prime mover and shaker for many of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa.
4. Ginbot 7 has officially declared to the UN Security Council on 27 October 2014 that it is not established and run by Amara elites (Memorandum to the UN Security Council, dated October 28, 2014 <http://www.ginbot7.org/2014/10/28/7473/>).
5. Based on the information we have about the Executive Committee of Ginbot 7, there is no single Amara amongst them. For instance Dr. Berhanu Nega, the Chairman, is Gurage, Vice-Chairman Abebe Bogale is Oromo, Secretary Muluneh Eyoel is Kembata, Public Relations Officer Ephrem Madebo is Kembata, and IT Officer Dr. Tadesse Biru is Gurage.
6. Presently, there are about 89 political organizations in Ethiopia. Most of these organizations have been created to give the TPLF ethnic-minority Bantustan Ethiopia the appearance of a 'democratic country.' However, the majority of these political organizations are 'liberation fronts' for their respective ethnic groups, which are staunch supporters of the TPLF. They all consider the Amara people as their enemies and as such they work towards the annihilation of the Amara people. This is the political reality in Ethiopia. We find it absolutely stunning that such an eminent body would base its findings and conclusions on information that is not vetted and that does not involve any individual Amaras or Amara leaning organization within Ethiopia or outside. We have no doubt

that the false information was supplied to the Committee by the Ethiopian government and by Anti-Amara individuals and groups. It is uncalled for on the part of the UN Security Council SEMG to declare **“Ginbot Sebat is a banned opposition group formed in 2005 by Amhara political elites committed to regime change in Ethiopia through armed struggle.”** Such unfounded statement will give a green light to the TPLF and its cohorts to their campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Amara people.

7. It is an open secret that the TPLF incriminates anyone who opposes its rule. TPLF achieved this by introducing two notorious laws: the “Anti-Terrorism,” and “Charities and Societies” Proclamations of 2009. The people incarcerated by the TPLF come from all walks of life, and include journalists, human rights advocates, members and leaders of opposition political organizations. The common wanton charges filed on these people in TPLF’s kangaroo courts are: “terrorist, chauvinist and *Naftegna* Amara, anti-peace, anti-development, supporter of old regimes, narrow-nationalist, etcetera.” Permit me to remind the Committee and the Council that, the UN Human Rights Council’s most recent review and assessment issued in September of this year, exposes publicly the continued abuses of human rights and the incarceration of journalists, bloggers and opposition party leaders and members by the TPLF. This fact reveals the level of inhumanity of the TPLF that should be abhorrent to the United Nations Security Council. Sadly enough, we witness similar accusations of the TPLF against its opponents as the bulk of the content in the SEMG report. Therefore, we urge the Security Council to re-examine the content and validity of this report critically before reaching any further conclusions.
8. The SEMG report has given no attention at all to the plight of the Amaras under TPLF rule. During the last 23 years, the Amaras have been subjected to genocide and systematic ethnic cleansing at the hands of the TPLF and its cohorts. To date, about 5,000,000 Amaras have been systematically eliminated by the TPLF. Millions have also been subjected to ethnic cleansing. In a rare show of transparency, the Director of the Central Statistical Agency, Ms. Samia Zekaria of the TPLF government, has publicly admitted in front of the TPLF’s rubber stamp Parliament that during the period 1996 – 2007, about 2,500,000 Amaras have been systematically eliminated (Please refer this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndSzSPskwAw>). Ms. Zekaria presented this fact based on the findings of the 2007 Population and Housing Census conducted in Ethiopia. As a direct consequence of this finding, the TPLF parliament has reduced the annual budget allocation to the Amara regional state, which further complicates the very survival of the Amara people.
9. Since coming to power, the TPLF has unlawfully incorporated parts of North Gondar and North Wollo districts of the Amara regional state into Tigray region. The total number of counties which have been taken over from North Gondar are five: Welkait, Tsegede, Tselemt, Setit and Tach-Armachiho. Raya and Qobo district of North Wollo, with all its counties, has also been taken over by TPLF and incorporated to Tigray region. Once the TPLF took control of these districts, it has carried out systematic genocide and ethnic cleansing on the indigenous Amara people, who lived there for generations. At present 95 percent of the residents in these parts of former Amara land are

members of the Tigre ethnic group. (A partial list of persecuted people of the Amara in these districts are cited in Annex 2).

10. Hundreds of thousands of Amaras, who used to live in Oromia (Harerghe, Arsi, Welega, Illubabor, Bale and Shewa), Southern Nations & Nationalities, Benshangul-Gumuz, and Gambela regional states have been hunted like wild animals and summarily persecuted, simply because of they are Amaras.
11. In order to create ‘Amara-free’ regions in Ethiopia, the TPLF has been carrying out ethnic cleansing of the Amaras in Somali, Oromia, Harari, Southern Nations & Nationalities, Benshangul-Gumuz, Gambela, Tigray, and parts of the Amara regional states. In this process about 500,000 Amaras have been systematically displaced from their ancestral land, devoid of all their possessions and livelihoods.
12. The highest number of refugees that come from Ethiopia are Amaras. In the USA alone, the Amaras constitute about 60 percent of Ethiopian immigrants. This fact has been corroborated by the former ambassador of the TPLF to the USA, in a letter dispatched from the Embassy to the cabinet office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Ref: Was/209/98 dated 24 November 2005. In fact this gives more evidence on how much the Amaras are marginalized in their own country of their basic human, political and economic rights.
13. In 1993 the TPLF introduced a directive which put civil servants who served for 20 years and are of the age of 45 on a forced retirement. The main purpose of that directive was to summarily fire all Amaras from key posts in the civil service, university professors, military, security, diplomatic mission, custom’s and transport sectors of the government. As a result, the current state-structure in Ethiopia is dominated completely by members of the TPLF. Even the very people who rule over the Amara regional state are members of other ethnic groups. In this regard leaders of the Amara Nation Democratic Movement (ANDM), which rules the Amara regional state, are Bereket Simon (Eritrean), Hilawe Yosef (Tigre), Tadesse Kassa (Tigre-Agew), Tefera Walwa (Gimira-Sidama), and Kassa TekleBerhan (Tigre-Agew). This act of the TPLF reminds us two of the dark chapters in human history. During the Nazi era, occupied people in Poland, Russia, Ukraine, and etcetera were ruled by Nazi Germans who speak the local languages. Also after the WWII, the Soviets installed a Russian who speaks Romanian to rule over Romania. This has been the practice under the TPLF Bantustan Ethiopia to subjugate the Amaras.
14. The TPLF is the sole authority on land ownership in Ethiopia. Nonetheless, the TPLF claims that it follows a policy of “free capitalist economy.” The reason why the TPLF kept land ownership under its tight grip, while it claims to follow ‘white capitalism’ is straightforward and simple. According to Mr. Herman Cohen, former Assistant Secretary for African Affairs at the US State Department, describes the late TPLF leader Mr. Meles Zenawi and his organization’s policy on private land ownership as follows: **“... that was not good, because the Amaras will come and take over and these people ... buy all the land and these people return to be serfs like they were under the Emperor”** (Please listen to minutes 29 – 30, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0nnV3S0UTw>).

15. We, members of MWAO, believe that the UN Security Council will not turn deaf ears to the plight of the Amara people. At least this is not expected from the most respected and powerful organ of the UN in the 21st Century. In fact, “chauvinist Amara”, supporter of old regimes”, and “terrorist” are some of the hate-mongering accusations of the TPLF Orwellian government against the Amara people. To our understanding, the UN Security Council is a highly responsible organ of the UN, which upholds the principle of fairness for all humanity. We believe the Security Council is a global vanguard that protects the weak from bullying by the powerful; promotes peace, freedom, cooperation, understanding and equality amongst all citizens of the world. By doing so, we believe the Council has achieved a relative peace throughout the world, taking into consideration the two recent destructive wars of the 20th Century. Therefore, MWAO believes that the Council is the anchor for world peace. However, some of the contents in the SEMG report regarding the Amaras contradict the reputation and global acceptance of the Security Council.
16. The argument by the SEMG that, by extension and inference, “Amhara elites” would associate themselves with President Afewerki’s government is equally baseless. As the report notes, **“Eritrean support to the TPDM is more sustained and organized than its support for other Ethiopian armed groups. The TPDM had become the most important Ethiopian opposition group inside Eritrea and it had a dual function as an Ethiopian armed opposition group and a protector of the Afewerki’s regime ... fighters are from the same ethnic group as Afewerki’s.”** (vii and viii)
17. In light of the foregoing evidence and arguments, I would like to urge the Committee and the Council to retract its reference concerning the role of “Amara elites” in the formation and management of Ginbot 7.

Many thanks in advance for your kind consideration of this request on behalf of the Amara people.

Sincerely,



Tekle Yeshaw

Chairman, Moresh Wegenie Amara Organization