

ADDA BILISUMMAA OROMOO (ABO-WBO)

OROMO LIBERATION FRONT



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The Resurgence of Forced Conscription in Oromia (OLF-OLA Press Release)

Over the past seven years, this regime has trained and deployed hundreds of thousands of young men and women—yet their fate remains a haunting mystery. Families have been left in agonizing silence, with no confirmation of whether their children are alive or dead. An entire generation's dreams have vanished into the abyss of Abiy Ahmed's unaccountability.

With voluntary enlistment in total collapse, Abiy Ahmed has resorted to a new wave of forced conscription. This desperate gambit exposes his regime's weakness and looming defeat in Oromia and beyond. In recent months, the regime has imposed brutal recruitment quotas, demanding at least 30 individuals from every kebele, by coercion if necessary. When even this draconian measure fell short, it turned to outright extortion, squeezing impoverished farmers for 5,000 to 10,000 birr each under the pretext of "arming the regime's forces."

The regime has now plunged into yet another unconscionable brutality, resorting to the abduction of children as young as 12 and 13 years old. These boys and girls are being snatched from classrooms, market stalls, and village roads - forcibly confined in police stations, makeshift detention, and grain warehouses. This systematic child conscription operates both by regime forces conducting mass roundups and regime-sanctioned predatory middlemen carrying out parallel kidnapping operations with official impunity. Escape attempts are brutally suppressed, with soldiers opening fire on unarmed children fleeing their captors.

The regime has recently normalized a predatory, multi-tiered ransom and extortion scheme:

1. Those who are able must pay exorbitant ransoms of up to 100,000 birr (nearly 2 years' income for many in the country) to reclaim their abducted children.
2. Those unable to pay are forced into a marketplace where regime-sanctioned brokers traffic impoverished children as "replacements" - effectively commodifying human lives to satisfy the regime's quotas.
3. Even families without eligible children to give to the regime aren't spared, facing compulsory payments of 30,000-50,000 birr.

This is the grotesque reality forced upon our people—a system of state terror that mirrors the worst crimes of apartheid. And in a cruel irony, this brutal conscription is imposed primarily, and often exclusively, on Oromia—the very region the regime postures as its political base to exploit the Oromo people and to engender animosity between mainly the Oromo and Amhara.

While Abiy Ahmed is consistently inconsistent, he has, however, never wavered from measures that aim to fracture Oromo unity while inciting broader ethnic conflict. By turning Oromo against Oromo and sacrificing our youth as cannon fodder in his endless wars, he aims to weaken resistance and prolong his failing rule.

To the Oromo youth—whether in your homes or trapped in the regime’s camps: The time has come to reclaim your destiny. Use the skills forced upon you by the regime to turn your weapons against your true enemy. Join the OLA, stand with your people, and help tear down this murderous regime once and for all.



OLF-OLA High Command
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