

Press Release

The Afar Forum strongly condemns the indiscriminate and extra judiciary killings of innocent civilians on April 19, 2014 near the Awash city. The federal police of EPRDF/TPLF killed 12 innocent civilian indiscriminately including a pregnant woman who was crying on the dead body of child who gunned down by the brutal federal force. This blatant disregard for human life is the hallmark of the ERPRD/TPLF military force trained to kill rather than to protect. It's undisputable fact that these kind brutal military actions have previously been reported from all regions throughout Ethiopia. Particularly, the victims of the aggression in Ogaden, Oromia, Gambela, Amhara and the 2005 massacre in Addis Ababa and elsewhere in the country are still fresh in our memories.

The statement from the federal police spokesperson Ato Abebe Worku, who even do not know how to pronounce the name and the location where the incident took place, down played and denied the killing of innocent civilians. However, eyewitnesses confirmed the indiscriminate killings of unarmed civilians by the brutal federal police. As a result, the people who live in the area closed the Djibouti – Addis Ababa road to show their frustration, continued harassment and indiscriminate killings of unarmed Afars by the brutal EPRDF/TPLF forces. The government has threatened the civilians from further demonstration in Afar region and warned, those who demonstrate would be convicted as terrorists.

Under the rule of EPRDF/TPLF the Afars are subjected to continued killings and detention for opposing eviction from their ancestral land, displacement from water points along the Awash River, for crossing the Djibouti-Addis Ababa road without causing interruption. Since April 1991 the EPRDF/TPLF forces have killed countless innocent Afars without due process. There is an ongoing displacement of the Afars from the fertile Awash River basin to more hostile areas where there is no water and grazing for their cattle. Attempts by Afar elders from all the five Zones to appeal their situation, lack of justice and due process to the so called federal authorities has fail on deaf ears.

The continued inter ethnic conflict between the Afars and Somali/Issa/Hawiya which is often instigated by the federal forces has claimed hundreds of lives in the last decays and continues to harm both the communities. The EPRDF/TPLF government has totally failed to bring a lasting solution to the conflict and to secure the security and safety to the people of the Afar region.

We call upon the Ethiopian people, political organizations and the international community to condemn the continued incriminated killings of the Afar by EPRDF/TPLF forces and advocate for the right of indigenous Afar people who are endangered nationality within the areas they live.

Afar Forum
Stuttgart, Germany, April 21, 2014

