



## **Statement of SAGE on The Looming Human Catastrophe in Ethiopia in the Aftermath of Artist Hachalu Hundesa's Assassination**

July 3, 2020

The Society Against Genocide in Ethiopia (SAGE) strongly condemns the recent murder of artist and activist Hachalu Hundessa, expresses its most profound condolences to his loved ones, and categorically denounces the indiscriminate killings of ethnic minorities, such as Amharas, Guraghes and Wolaytas, in the Oromia region in the aftermath of the assassination.

While SAGE fully supports the measures being taken by the Ethiopian government to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice and stabilize the country, we believe that the predictably tragic events that have been witnessed are a regrettable consequence of the indecisiveness of the same ethnic-based government that was established on a constitution that is pivoted on the primary objective of irreparably eroding national unity and creating acrimony among ethnic groups.

SAGE cautions the government against using the occasion as a pretext for advancing political objectives by imprisoning leaders of legitimate opposition groups that have no direct or indirect association with the current evolving situation.

As has been reported by SAGE and other human rights groups, the government in power has despondently failed to take decisive actions against extremist and other criminal groups, despite increasing signals of genocidal violence that included:

- 1) Ethnically aimed assassinations and assassination attempts on prominent figures, including the current prime minister;
- 2) Targeted killings and kidnappings of Amharas, as well as related ethnic-based massacres and persecutions in Oromia and other regions;
- 3) Destruction of religious institutions and national heritages; and
- 4) Campaigns of hate speeches and disinformation to incite ethnic violence using government approved platforms.



## **SOCIETY AGAINST GENOCIDE IN ETHIOPIA (SAGE)**

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SAGE urges the government in power to assume full responsibility for the human rights violations that resulted due to its inaction and to use this opportunity to redress its past mistakes by bringing the criminal elements to justice, protect the people of Amhara from indiscriminate massacre, and pave the way for the formation of a representative government that is built on a constitution that is framed on the protection of individual rights.

SAGE calls upon the international community and human rights groups to be cognizant of the looming human tragedy in Ethiopia and to take necessary preventive measures and actions to avert bloodshed and suffering. After the horrific tragedy in Rwanda, the international community has the moral obligation to affirm its vow of never sitting idly as the possibility of another interhawame-style episode is unfolding in the Horn of African country.

SAGE fully believes that the prevailing issues of the Grand Renaissance Dam (GERD) project and the COVID-19 pandemic have direct and indirect human rights implications; and, hence, unswervingly applauds the government's engagement in protecting the country's sovereignty and mitigating the pandemic impacts, while calling upon all genuine Ethiopians to provide their unconditional support to the government in advancing these efforts.

SAGE is an association of concerned Ethiopians established in 2020 to monitor, with the support of members of the international community, the evolving security situation in Ethiopia and to provide an early warning of impending humanitarian disaster that can bring about an all-out civil war in the country and cause devastating destabilization in the entire region and beyond.

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