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# INTERNATIONAL AMHARA ALLIANCE

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## Press Release: Response to Genocide Watch Report

18 October 2021

**The International Amhara Alliance (IAA) strongly condemns Genocide Watch's failure to report on the Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide perpetrated on ethnic Amhara civilians across Ethiopia.**

Genocide Watch published a report in August 2021 titled, '[Countries of Special Concern](#)' report which completely omits ethnic cleansing and genocide of ethnic Amhara civilians in Oromia, Benishangul-Gumuz, Amhara, as well as disputed regions of Ethiopia. As Genocide Watch is considered to be the foremost organization concerning genocide, IAA is outraged with the omission of the Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide perpetrated on ethnic Amhara civilians across Ethiopia from the organization's reporting.

Ethnic Amhara civilians have faced genocidal massacres for decades but even more so in the last three years since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took office. The ongoing massacres took place both during the current conflict in Northern Ethiopia which began in November 2020 and prior in virtually every region in Ethiopia. While the reasons for this are complicated, it is in part a consequence of failure of security forces to uphold their duties, failure of government to take appropriate measures (in many instances, government officials are suspected of being complicit in the violence particularly in the Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz regions), a racist constitution (which has been condemned by Genocide Watch), years of indoctrination, hate speech and fierce anti-Amhara propaganda. In the first quarter of 2021 alone, the Amhara Association of America (AAA) recorded that at least 491 Amhara civilians were killed in massacres, 500,000 have been internally displaced both by nonstate- and state-affiliated actors such as the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) or Oromo Liberation Front "Shene", Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Gumuz militias and Qemant militias. This includes the complete destruction of entire Amhara-majority towns such as Ataye, Shewarobit, and surrounding towns in attacks that took place by OLA militias in March and April 2021. In addition, killings of ethnic Amhara civilians have been

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The IAA is a global alliance advocating for the Amhara people of Ethiopia. We serve as an information and resource hub, working to strengthen awareness efforts & **save lives**.

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recorded in every administrative "zone" of the Oromia Region and multiple administrative areas of the Benishangul-Gumuz region.

Additionally, AAA has documented ethnic cleansing and genocide perpetrated against ethnic Amharas continuously between May and October 2021 specifically in various zones in Wollega, Oromia and Metekel, Benishangul Gumuz. The massacres of ethnic Amharas across Ethiopia have not subsided, documentation and acknowledgement of these massacres by Genocide Watch has been non-existent since November 2020, where Genocide Watch publicly stated that "the genocidal intent and atrocities committed by the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) should be condemned and the perpetrators of the massacres of Amharas should be brought to justice."

Furthermore, it is extremely alarming that the omission of Amhara victims of Genocide and ethnic cleansing is coupled with Genocide Watch is disseminating anti-Amhara and historical narratives on ethnic Amharas through the Genocide Watch twitter account. Specifically on twitter on September 18th, 2021, Genocide Watch shared [this](#) specific infographic stating, 'Ethiopia has a long history of Genocide.' The post lists Tigrayans as victims of historic genocide citing famine and attacks in retaliation to rebellion while egregiously omitting the famines in the Amhara province of Wollo, that occurred at the same time. The post even goes further explicitly stating that Emperor Haile Selassie was an Amhara Emperor 'who bombed and regularly imposed famines on people who resisted his rule.'

First and foremost, Emperor Haile Selassie was of mixed ethnic identity which included heritage from Amhara and Oromo parents. Second, the Haile Selassie era saw famine in the Amhara province of Wollo which saw the death of over 80,000 people. The

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omission of Amhara victims of the famine coupled with the ahistorical narration of the emperor who oversaw the famine is worrying to say the least.

Not only is this historical narrative reminiscent of those used by perpetrators of violence against ethnic Amhara civilians but has the potential to further exacerbate the genocidal massacres thereby further endangering the Amhara people, particularly those dwelling in areas with high levels of hostility towards them.

IAA and consulted community members agree that Genocide Watch's actions over the last few months amount to institutional gaslighting and genocide denial. In fact, it appears there is a concerted effort to downplay and outright deny atrocities that Genocide Watch has previously addressed such abuses recorded when TPLF was in control of the Ethiopian federal government from 1991 to 2018.

IAA along with our member organizations call on Genocide Watch to take the necessary steps to redress the gaps in reporting by acknowledging the Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide perpetrated on ethnic Amhara civilians across Ethiopia. Our primary interest as an organization is to advocate for the safety of the Amhara people of Ethiopia, so if Genocide Watch does not address these gaps in a timely manner, IAA will call on our global community to stand with us and hold this organization accountable.

Sincerely,  
Communications Team,  
International Amhara Alliance

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