

THE SILENT SUFFERING OF THE AMHARA PEOPLE IN ETHIOPIA

July 2026



Abstract

In recent years, Ethiopia has experienced a significant escalation in human rights violations, further exacerbated by conflicts in the Tigray, Oromia, and Amhara regions. While these issues have garnered international attention, the extent of the abuses, specifically those inflicted upon the Amhara population, lacks sufficient coverage. This report seeks to address this oversight by offering a thorough examination of the severe human rights challenges faced by the Amhara community.

The findings of this report reveal a troubling pattern of extensive human rights abuses against the Amhara people in Ethiopia, marked by recurrent incidents of massacres, extrajudicial killings, drone strikes, forced displacements, and mass arrests. These acts are predominantly driven by ethnic and religious discrimination, leading to substantial casualties, and exacerbating conflicts within the country. The Ethiopian government's response to these violations has been critically insufficient, with many instances suggesting possible negligence or even direct state involvement in the human rights abuses. This ongoing crisis has inflicted severe humanitarian consequences on the Amhara population. Furthermore, the plight of the Amhara people has been largely overlooked on the international stage, indicating a critical need for increased global attention and action.

These violations could not only qualify as crimes against humanity but may also indicate a pattern consistent with a risk of genocide. Given the gravity of these offenses, there exists an immediate imperative for an impartial investigation under the auspices of the United Nations. This report aspires to catalyse such an inquiry and also to inform policymakers, human rights organizations, and the general public about the imminent risks faced by the Amhara community.

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| Title: The Silent Suffering of the Amhara People in Ethiopia

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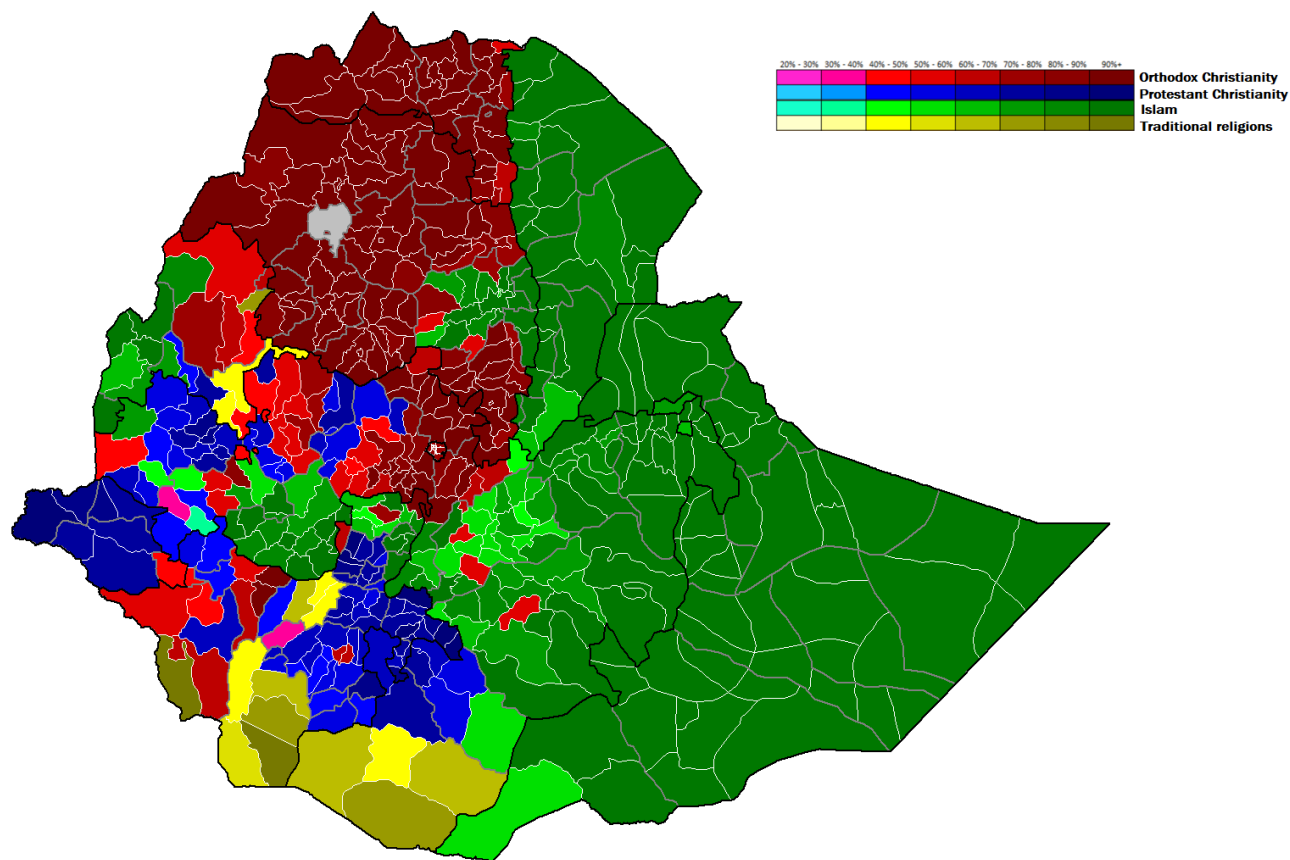
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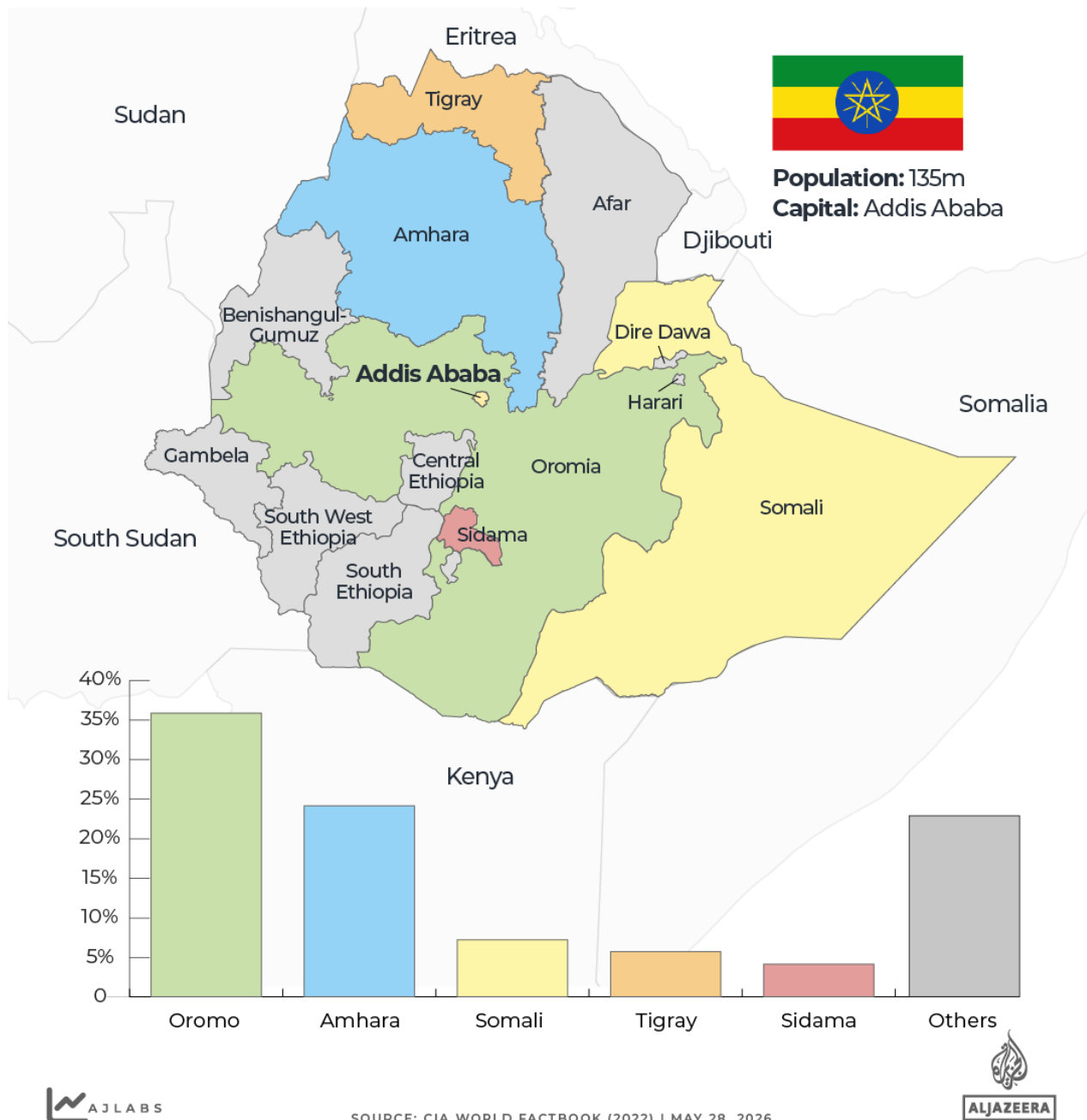
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Religious Distribution in Ethiopia by District (2007), Source: Religious map of Ethiopia, Wikimedia Commons. Based on 2007 Ethiopian census data. Public domain map.

Ethiopia's ethnic groups and regions

The nation is subdivided into 12 regional states plus two chartered cities (Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa), each largely organised around a dominant ethnic group.



Ethiopia's Ethnic Groups and Regional States, Source: Al Jazeera AJLabs, Ethiopia's ethnic groups and regions, based on data from the CIA World Factbook (2022). Published May 28, 2026. Used under the terms indicated by the original licence (CC BY-NC-SA).

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I. Introduction

Ethiopia is a country located in the Horn of Africa. It is home to a diverse array of cultures, languages, and ethnicities. With a history that spans thousands of years, the nation has undergone significant social, economic, and political transformations throughout its existence.

Ethiopia is home to over 80 distinct ethnic groups, each with its own language, customs, and traditions. The Oromo, Amhara, Somali, and Tigrayans are among the largest ethnic groups. While this diversity is a source of cultural richness, it has also been a source of tension and conflict, especially when it comes to the issues of political representation and resource allocation.

Religion plays a pivotal role in the social fabric of Ethiopia. The country has the second-largest Orthodox population in the world, numbering around 36 million people¹. With deep historical roots, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has profoundly influenced the values, norms, and traditions of the nation. Islam, too, has played a similar role, especially in the eastern and southeastern regions where it is predominant. Other religions practiced in Ethiopia include Protestantism and, although not widespread, traditional African religions such as the *Waaqeffanna*.

Ethiopia has experienced rapid economic growth in recent decades, shifting from a primarily agrarian economy to an increasingly urbanized and industrialized one. However, problems such as poverty, unemployment, and income inequality remain largely unresolved. The majority of the population still depends on subsistence farming, and there is a significant gap between urban and rural areas in terms of access to services and opportunities. Government initiatives to promote development have led to a series of controversies, particularly with regard to land rights and population displacement.

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A. The Political Context of Ethiopia

Ancient Ethiopian civilizations, such as the Axumite kingdom, the Zagwe dynasty, or the Solomonic dynasty, were characterized by monarchic political structures. This longstanding monarchical tradition was disrupted in 1974 with the deposition of Emperor Haile Selassie I by the communist “Derg” regime. The Derg regime was characterized by a pronounced authoritarianism and widespread human rights abuses. Its rule came to an end in 1991 when the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) seized power. The Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) was the dominant member of the EPRDF coalition and wielded significant influence over the political landscape of Ethiopia. Under this leadership, Ethiopia adopted a new constitution that established the country as a federal democratic republic. The new political system divided the country into regional states based on ethnic lines,

¹ Pew Research Center, “Orthodox Christians are highly religious in Ethiopia, much less so in former Soviet Union,” published November 8, 2017, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2017/11/08/orthodox-christians-are-highly-religious-in-ethiopia-much-less-so-in-former-soviet-union/>

thereby intertwining ethnic identity and politics. While this structure aimed to address the diverse ethnic composition of the country, it has been a source of tensions and conflicts.

Under the governance of the EPRDF coalition, Ethiopia has witnessed significant strides in poverty reduction, infrastructure development, and sustained economic growth. However, these developmental achievements have been overshadowed by the government's authoritarian tendencies. The EPRDF systematically excluded its opponents from Ethiopia's political landscape and engaged in brutal repression against dissenters and public protesters. These actions sparked widespread civil unrest, with significant protests erupting nationwide from 2016 to 2018, calling for an end to authoritarian practices and advocating for political reform. This period of intense civil discontent led to a pivotal shift within the government, notably marked by the appointment of Abiy Ahmed, an ethnically Oromo leader, as Prime Minister in 2018.

After coming to power, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed dissolved the EPRDF party to form the currently ruling Prosperity Party in 2019. Initially, he was regarded as a beacon of hope by many Ethiopians and received international support. Notably, he was awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for formalizing a peace treaty between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2018.

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Despite the early optimism, not all was positive in the aftermath of the transition. Under Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's leadership, serious human rights issues emerged. In the first years of his tenure, the country grappled with atrocities where, oftentimes, security officials were criticized for their inadequate response in protecting civilians. Furthermore, in 2020, a grave conflict erupted in the Tigray region, the northernmost part of Ethiopia, pitting the TPLF against the federal government's Prosperity Party. This conflict eventually involved a number of players and led to a humanitarian crisis.

Throughout the duration of the fighting, international observers and human rights organizations documented widespread abuses, levelling severe and credible accusations of atrocity crimes against all participating belligerents. Atrocities, such as the Axum massacre in late 2020, showed the stark reality of Christians in the region. As the crisis deepened, the European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ) repeatedly sounded the alarm on the international stage through interventions at the European Parliament, as well as publications on its own page². Although a

² European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), "International Community Concerned About Threats to Tigray's Cultural and Religious Heritage," published February 7, 2022, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/un/la-communaute-internationale-sinquiete-des-menaces-qui-pesent-contre-le-patrimoine-culturel-et-religieux-du-tigre>, See also, European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), "Civils et religieux chrétiens victimes du conflit du Tigré en Éthiopie," published September 3, 2021, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/un/christian-civilians-and-religious-victims-of-the-tigray-conflict-in-ethiopia?lng=fr>, See also, European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), "European Parliament - Conference on the Tigray War in Ethiopia," published October 8, 2021, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/eu/parlement-europeen---conference-sur-la-guerre-du-tigre-en-ethiopie?lng=en>

2022 truce officially ended the war, tensions remain high and now threaten to plunge the region back into conflict³.

The country continues to experience mass atrocities elsewhere, predominantly targeting the Amhara ethnic group. These acts were primarily attributed to armed rebel factions, notably the “Oromo Liberation Army” (OLA). Amidst these tensions, in April 2023, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced plans to disband the Amhara regional security forces, known as the Amhara Special Forces (ASF), intending to integrate them into a centralized army. This decision was met with significant resistance from the Amhara community, who, already subjected to severe persecution, took to the streets to protest. They feared that the dissolution of the ASF would exacerbate their vulnerability and expose them to further violence. Following this decision, a considerable number of former ASF members defected to join ‘Fano’, a decentralized militia already operating in the region composed mainly of young volunteer fighters. This situation led to a significant deterioration of the security situation in the Amhara region, culminating in the declaration of a state of emergency in August 2023.

B. Background of the Amhara Population

The Amhara people are the second most populous ethnic group in Ethiopia and have played a significant role in the country’s history. Most of the population resides in the Amhara Region, located in the north-central part of Ethiopia. They speak Amharic, which is arguably the second most spoken Semitic language in the world⁴. Over time, the language has transcended its regional boundaries to become a lingua franca across Ethiopia.

In the medieval era, rulers from the Amhara ethnic group are credited for being pivotal to the creation of Christian kingdoms within Ethiopia. This influence continued into modern times, as Amhara leaders played a key role in shaping the political and administrative structure of a modern Ethiopia. Subsequently, they have had a considerable influence on the nation’s politics and culture. However, this influence has been a source of tension as other ethnic groups, particularly the Oromos and Tigrayans, fostered a sense of marginalisation.

The grievances between the Oromo, Tigray, and Amhara ethnic groups have manifested themselves in deeply troubling ways, escalating to violence, ethnic cleansings, and mass atrocities. The situation has reached a critical level since an ethnically Oromo Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, came to power in 2018.

³ International Crisis Group, “Power Struggle in Ethiopia’s Tigray: Averting a Return to War,” published May 15, 2026, accessed June 24, 2026, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/qna/africa/ethiopia-eritrea/power-struggle-ethiopias-tigray-averting-return-war>.

⁴ Babbel Magazine, “All In The Language Family: The Semitic Languages,” accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/semitic-languages>. See also, Boston University Libraries, “Research: Language Learning - Amharic,” accessed November 7, 2023, <https://library.bu.edu/amharic>

The situation of the Amhara people is deeply intertwined with that of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. For centuries, the Amhara played a central role in the development of Ethiopian Christianity, and many of the country's important religious institutions, monasteries, and traditions are closely associated with the region. In several parts of Ethiopia, Orthodox Christianity is often perceived as deeply connected to Amhara identity, although the two should not be understood as synonymous. This relationship, as well as the broader issue of attacks against Christians in Ethiopia, is further explored in the section entitled “[A Series of Attacks on Christians in Ethiopia](#)” on page 9 of this report.

II. Ethnic Violence and Religious Persecution Beyond the Amhara Region

The Amhara people, who are predominantly Orthodox Christians, have been subjected to recurring massacres, particularly over the past eight years. Across several regions of Ethiopia Amhara civilians have faced killings, forced displacement, attacks on places of worship, and other forms of targeted violence. Although the victims are mostly Christians, there have been numerous reports of attacks against Muslim Amharas, particularly in western Oromia. These acts of violence are primarily orchestrated by armed groups and are often alleged to involve the passive acquiescence or the complicity of local authorities. Far from being isolated events, the recurrence of such attacks suggests a broader pattern of ethnic and religious violence directed against vulnerable communities, particularly the Amhara people and Ethiopian Christians at large, who may be targeted for distinct or overlapping reasons.

A. The Burayu Massacre

Between September 14 and 16 in 2018, a series of violent events unfolded in the Burayu district near Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa⁵. These events coincided with the return of leaders from the exiled Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), a group advocating for the self-determination of the Oromo people. While the return of the OLF leaders was intended to mark a moment of reconciliation, it instead served as a backdrop for a surge in ethnic violence.

Mobs of Oromo youth took to the streets, targeting the homes and businesses of all ethnic minorities. The largest ethnic minority in the Burayu district are the Amhara⁶, but all the ethnic minorities in the area, such as the Gurage and the Gamo people were victims of this violence. The mobs were heard chanting “leave our land” as they carried out acts of looting and violence. Illustrating the scale of the tragedy, Reuters quoted a witness as saying: “During the night, there

⁵ Reuters, “At least 23 die in weekend of Ethiopia ethnic violence,” by Aaron Maasho, published September 17, 2018, accessed September 6, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-violence-idUSKCN1LX0VK>

⁶ Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, *The 2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia: Statistical Report for Oromiya Region* (Addis Ababa: Population Census Commission), published 2010, accessed July 9, 2026, <http://www.statsethiopia.gov.et/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Population-and-Housing-Census-2007-Oromiya-Statistical.pdf>, p. 255.

were several corpses along the roads”. Even though the numbers are suspected to be higher, the confirmed death toll of this massacre is 23 people⁷.

Witnesses who spoke to the local media stressed their shock regarding the barbaric violence as well as their frustration at the inaction of government authorities. During an interview on Ethiopian Broadcasting Service, a prominent Ethiopian media platform, one individual conveyed his dismay at the situation. He questioned, “What have we done, we’re not politicians.”⁸

Regarding the ineffectiveness of law enforcement, the same witness noted that although the police responded to calls for assistance, their actions upon arrival were markedly passive. Specifically, he stated that the officers remained in the periphery of the crime scenes, claiming that they lacked the authorization to intervene.

This event has profoundly unsettled the nation, marking a seminal moment as it may be the first instance of ethnic violence encroaching upon the vicinity of the capital. The subsequent incidents reveal a more targeted animus, particularly against the Amhara and Orthodox communities.

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B. A Series of Attacks on Christians in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, 2018 and 2019 were marked by a worrying upsurge in arson attacks on churches. According to the Amhara Professionals Union (APU), over the course of these two years, some 30 churches have been attacked across the country, with more than half burnt to the ground⁹. Most of the churches were burned down in eastern and southern Ethiopia. Elias Gebreselassie, a journalist based in Addis Ababa, gave his opinion on the matter to New African Magazine at the time and said¹⁰ “The burning of churches could lead to a wider distrust within society and could be a time-bomb. Also, in eastern and southern Ethiopia, many people associate the Orthodox Church with northern Ethiopia or specifically, ethnic Amharas, so it could deepen political polarization.” Indeed, this led to a reinforcement of the attribution of the Orthodox faith in Ethiopia to the “Northerners.”

The false and dangerous conflation between Amhara and Orthodox Christianity in Ethiopia has been further echoed by prominent Oromo figures. During an interview, Dr. Gemechu Megersa has openly claimed “Christian means Amhara, and Amhara means Christian”¹¹. He further claimed in this interview that, from his experience, an Oromo Christian self-identifies as an

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ ebstv worldwide, “አዲስ ነገር ወቅታዊ እና አዲስ መረጃ(የቡራዩ አካባቢ ተፈናቃዮች)/Whats new breaking News sept 16,” YouTube, published September 16, 2018, accessed September 15, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z15L5o3h72k&ab_channel=ebstvworldwide

⁹ Global Issues, “Huge moment for Ethiopia as Abiy Ahmed wins Nobel Peace prize,” published October 12, 2019, <https://www.globalissues.org/news/2019/10/12/25743>

¹⁰ New African Magazine, “Why are Ethiopia’s churches under attack?” published October 9, 2019, <https://newafricanmagazine.com/20840/>

¹¹ YouTube, “LTV SHOW: ወያኔ ከፋፈለን የሚለው ተረት ነው - ዶ/ር ገመቹ መገርሳ,” published October 2, 2019, accessed June 16, 2026, timestamp 19:42, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAsOwq3Rx0M>.

Amhara, and that “what cleanses you from your Oromo identity is your baptism”. This identity fusion makes whole categories of people killable by association. Oromo Christians are therefore liable to be persecuted as though they were Amhara. A prominent Oromo bishop, who was involved in the 2023 breakaway Synod, addressed this issue directly. He explained that, according to those persecuting the Church, all Orthodox Christians, including those who are ethnically Oromo, are considered Amhara¹². This conflation creates a complex pattern of targeting in which ethnicity and religious identity become intertwined, exposing Orthodox Christians from different backgrounds to the same forms of persecution.

The events referred to as the “October 2019 Ethiopian Clashes” proved particularly revealing with regard to the groups targeted by the violence. A prominent Oromo activist, strongly accused by the Amhara community of spreading hate speech and inciting massacres, had claimed that security forces were trying to orchestrate an attack against him. Following this statement published on his Facebook page, crowds of young Oromos took to the streets in protest. Very quickly, the demonstration turned into a riot that cost the lives of at least 86 people. According to a church spokesman who spoke to AFP, 52 of the dead were members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church¹³.

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Yet the dead were not singled out by faith alone. In Dodola, a town in southeastern Oromia, the killing began in a predominantly Amhara neighbourhood, and Human Rights Watch reported that victims there were “apparently targeted simply based on their ethnic identity or perceived religious affiliation.”¹⁴ Residents told Voice of America's Amharic service that armed youths burned the homes of Amhara families, most of them Orthodox Christians¹⁵. Many Amhara residents sought shelter in the local Kidane Mehret church, but a grenade was thrown into the church compound and wounded dozens. Three of the injured were on their way to the hospital, but the vehicle transporting them was attacked and they were killed¹⁶.

These mob killings were seen as a direct attack on the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and prompted a reaction from the Vatican, with Pope Francis expressing his “closeness to this beloved Church and her patriarch”, asking believers to pray for the persecuted Christians in Ethiopia¹⁷.

¹² YouTube, “ገደብ ያጣው መዋቅራዊ ግድያ // ከገዳዮች በላይ የውስጥ ምንጪዎች ጥፋት //ቆይታ ከመምህር ፋንታሁን ዋቁ ጋር,” published June 11, 2026, accessed June 16, 2026, timestamp 21:42 <https://www.youtube.com/live/8RYg37h-e48?si=vAJLc4qAWxPjpDiI>.

¹³ France 24, “Orthodox Ethiopians criticise PM Abiy over deadly clashes,” published October 27, 2019, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/20191027-orthodox-ethiopians-criticise-pm-abiy-over-deadly-clashes>

¹⁴ Human Rights Watch, “Ethiopia: Justice Needed for Deadly October Violence,” published April 1, 2020, accessed June 26, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/01/ethiopia-justice-needed-deadly-october-violence>.

¹⁵ Voice of America Amharic, “በኦሮሞ ክልል በተቀሰቀሰ ግጭት የሞትና የመቁሰል ጉዳት ደረሰ,” published October 24, 2019, accessed June 26, 2026, <https://amharic.voanews.com/a/oromia-protest-death-/5138145.html>

¹⁶ Ethiopia Observer, “Ethnic Amharas targeted in killings in Oromia region,” published October 25, 2019, accessed June 26, 2026, <https://www.ethiopiaobserver.com/2019/10/25/ethnic-amharas-targeted-in-killings-in-oromia-region/>.

¹⁷ Catholic News Agency, “Pope Francis asks for prayer for persecuted Christians in Ethiopia,” accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/42711/pope-francis-asks-for-prayer-for-persecuted-christians-in-ethiopia>

The efforts of certain Oromo factions to transpose ethnic tensions onto religious terrain reached a climax in January 2023 when three Oromo archbishops of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church rebelled and formed a new “Oromo” synod¹⁸. This schism was state sponsored but widely rejected by the population. Therefore, it caused a massive social upheaval and extensive demonstrations with believers barring these bishops from presiding over their places of worship and conducting liturgical ceremonies. This led to the intervention of the Oromo special forces in support of the new synod which exacerbated the discord, culminating in violent encounters between these security forces and churchgoers. These violent incidents resulted in the loss of multiple lives, most notably at Saint Michael Church in Shashemene, where law enforcement reportedly resorted to the use of live rounds against the assembly on February 4, 2023¹⁹.

In the following months, violent incidents targeting the faithful have intensified in number. On November 23 and 27, 2023, a series of attacks took place in three villages in the Arsi zone of the Oromia region²⁰. Over those two days, a total of 36 Orthodox Christians were forcibly taken from their homes and subsequently executed. The ages of the victims varied widely, from a 28-day-old infant to a 70-year-old elderly individual. A testimony provided to Voice of America (VOA) highlighted that the assailants targeted these individuals due to their Christian faith and their possession of Amhara associated names²¹.

The same region bore witness to another attack on December 4, 2023. This subsequent attack mirrored the previous in its approach, involving the abduction of individuals from their homes and their execution²². This incident resulted in 5 fatalities and the arson of 3 residential properties. Similarly to the previous attacks, a witness reported that the victims spoke Amharic²³. While the identity of the perpetrators remains uncertain, the government has suggested the involvement of the OLA in these acts²⁴.

In the wake of these tragic events, the Patriarchate Head Office of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church issued a vehement condemnation of the attacks, calling for the government to enhance

¹⁸ Reuters, “Ethiopian Orthodox Church reaches deal with breakaway Oromo synod,” published February 16, 2023, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopian-orthodox-church-reaches-deal-with-breakaway-oromo-synod-2023-02-16/>

¹⁹ European Centre for Law and Justice, “Ethnic schism: A delicate way out of a crisis for Ethiopia,” accessed November 14, 2023, <https://ecfj.org/religious-autonomy/un/schisme-ethnique--delicate-sorite-de-crise-en-ethiopie>

²⁰ Voice of America Amharic, “በሺርካ ወረዳ ሃይማኖት የለየ በተባለ ጥቃት 36 ምእመናን ሲገደሉ ቀሪዎቹ እንደሸሹ ተገለጸ”, published November 30, 2023, accessed March 13, 2024, <https://amharic.voanews.com/a/east-arsi-killing/7378932.html>

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² Voice of America Amharic, “በሺርካ ወረዳ ‘ሃይማኖት የተለየ’ በተባለ ጥቃት ተጨማሪ አምስት ምእመናን እንደተገደሉ ተገለጸ”, published December 5, 2023, accessed March 12, 2024, <https://amharic.voanews.com/a/arsi-more-killings/7385354.html>. See also, MK TV, “ዜና ተዋሕዶ || ትኩረት ያጣው የኦርቶዶክሳውያን ግድያ,” YouTube, published December 5, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VpE8ef_ta7g

²³ Voice of America Amharic, “በሺርካ ወረዳ ‘ሃይማኖት የተለየ’ በተባለ ጥቃት ተጨማሪ አምስት ምእመናን እንደተገደሉ ተገለጸ”, published December 5, 2023, accessed March 12, 2024, <https://amharic.voanews.com/a/arsi-more-killings/7385354.html> (timestamp from 1:20 to 1:30).

²⁴ Addis Standard, “News: 45 believers killed in two separate attacks in Arsi and Kellem Wollega zones, Oromia region,” published December 1, 2023, accessed March 12, 2024, <https://addisstandard.com/news-45-believers-killed-in-two-separate-attacks-in-arsi-and-kellem-wollega-zones-oromia-region/>

protective measures for the increasingly persecuted faithful and to conduct thorough investigations to ensure justice for the victims and their families²⁵.

However, the violence did not abate. On December 28, 2023, Christian pilgrims were brutally attacked as they returned from the annual feast of the Archangel Saint Gabriel at Kulubi, a significant pilgrimage site in Ethiopia²⁶. Near the town of Metehara, the pilgrims encountered gunmen who launched a sudden assault, resulting in eight deaths and ten abductions. A witness recounted to Addis Standard, a national news magazine, that the assailants “torched vehicles and fired upon us as we were returning from the Kulubi St. Gebreal celebration.”²⁷

Furthermore, on February 16, 2024, four clergymen were kidnapped from the Ziquala Debre Kewakibt Abune Gebre Menfes Kidus Monastery in the Oromia region²⁸. These individuals were Aba Teklemariam Asrat, the monastery’s head administrator; Kidanemariam Tilahun, the secretary; Aba Gebremariam Abebe, a religious teacher and priest; and Hailemariam Woldesenbet, a monk²⁹. Tragically, they were killed on February 17, 2024, and their bodies were later recovered from a forest. They received a proper Christian burial on February 24, 2024. In response to this act, the church released a statement attributing the kidnapping and killings to the OLA and called upon the government to intensify its efforts in safeguarding the security of its citizens, emphasizing the urgent need for heightened vigilance³⁰.

This issue of religious persecution has not been confined to the Orthodox community in Ethiopia. On November 24, 2023, a separate incident in the Gidami district of the Kellem Wollega zone highlighted the broader vulnerability of Christians in the country. Nine individuals, part of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), were kidnapped while participating in an overnight prayer service³¹. According to Lalisa Daniel (PhD), head of the Evangelism and Theology department at the EECMY, who spoke to the BBC, the victims were church leaders and organizers engaged in prayers and preparations for

²⁵ Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Patriarchate Head Office, “በአርሲ ዞን አንዳንድ ወረዳዎች በአርቶዶክሳውያን ላይ የተፈጸመውን ግድያ የጠቅላይ ቤተክህነት አስተዳደር ጉባኤ አወገዘ።”, published December 5, 2023, accessed March 13, 2024, <https://eotceth.org/a/2023/12/>

²⁶ Orthodoxy Cognate PAGE, “Gunmen Target Ethiopian Orthodox Pilgrims Returning from an Annual Feast,” published January 1, 2024, accessed March 14, 2024, <https://ocpsociety.org/gunmen-target-ethiopian-orthodox-pilgrims-returning-from-an-annual-feast/>

²⁷ Addis Standard, “News: Eight killed, 10 more abducted as civilians return from St. Gabriel celebration in Kulubi,” published January 2, 2024, accessed March 11, 2024, <https://addisstandard.com/news-eight-killed-another-10-abducted-as-civilians-return-from-st-gabriel-celebration-in-kulubi/>

²⁸ BBC Tigrinya, “ቤተ ክርስቲያን አርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ኢትዮጵያ፡ አርባዕተ ፈለስቲ ብዕጡቻት ከምዝተቐተለዋ አፍሊጣ”, published February 24, 2024, accessed March 16, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/tigrinya/articles/c6pqeege3e2o>, See also, VOA Amharic, “የዝቋላ ገዳማውያንን በገደሉ ታጣቂዎች ላይ ርምጃ እየተወሰደ ነው - የኦሮሚያ ክልል,” published February 23, 2024, accessed March 16, 2024, <https://amharic.voanews.com/a/ziquala-monastery-killing/7500155.html>

²⁹ Wazema, “Wazema Daily News, Feb 22” published February 22, 2024, accessed March 18, 2024, <https://wazema.substack.com/p/wazema-daily-news-feb-22>

³⁰ Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Patriarchate Head Office, “በታላቁ ዝቋላ ደብረ ከዋክብት አቡነ ገብረ መንፈስ ቅዱስ ገዳም የተፈጸመውን ጥቃት አስመልክቶ በምሥራቅ ሸዋ ዞን ዋና አስተዳዳሪ የተመራ ውይይት ተካሄደ,” published February 23, 2024, accessed March 12, 2024, <https://eotceth.org/a/በታላቁ-ዝቋላ-ደብረ-ከዋክብት-አቡነ-ገብረ-መንፈስ-ቅዱስ-ገዳም-አባቶች-አስከሬን-ተረሽነው-ከተቀበሩበት-ከኢዳ-ተከለሃይማኖት-አካባቢ-ተነስቶ-በገዳሙ-በከብር-ሥርዓተ-ቀብር-ተፈጸመ>, published February 24, 2024, accessed March 12, 2024, <https://eotceth.org/a/በግፍ-የተገደሉት-የዝቋላ-ደብረ-ከዋክብት-አቡነ-ገብረ-መንፈስ-ቅዱስ-ገዳም-አባቶች-አስከሬን-ተረሽነው-ከተቀበሩበት-ከኢዳ-ተከለሃይማኖት-አካባቢ-ተነስቶ-በገዳሙ-በከብር-ሥርዓተ-ቀብር-ተፈጸመ>

³¹ Addis Standard, “News: 45 believers killed in two separate attacks in Arsi and Kellem Wollega zones, Oromia region,” published December 1, 2023, accessed March 12, 2024, <https://addisstandard.com/news-45-believers-killed-in-two-separate-attacks-in-arsi-and-kellem-wollega-zones-oromia-region/>

the Sunday service³². These individuals were abducted by unidentified armed men during their prayers and found deceased two days later.

C. The Shashemene Massacres

The “Shashemene Massacres” revealed the ethno-religious character of this persecution. On June 29, 2020, a renowned Oromo singer and political activist was assassinated in Ethiopia, leading to massive protests that escalated into a premeditated massacre. In the subsequent weeks, a group identifying as “Queroo” (literally translating to youth in Oromo language) targeted Amhara and Orthodox believers in the Oromia region. Cities including Shashemene, Arsi, Dera, and Zeway witnessed significant destruction, with properties of non-Oromo residents being vandalized and burned. The violence resulted in an estimated 239 casualties. A harrowing account from a survivor details the brutal killing of his nine-month-pregnant wife in front of their children. “They killed her because she is an Orthodox Christian” he recalls, “They said that Christian children should not be born, Amhara children should not be born”³³. According to the head of the Western Arsi diocese, the mob targeted Orthodox Christians of all ethnicities in his area, giving the massacres a purely religious dimension. The NGO “Minority Rights Group” reported³⁴ that the attacks were well-prepared and that the rioters had a list of names and went from house to house checking ID cards and conducting massacres according to the list. According to reports from the same NGO, police forces in these areas have been of no help, as they claimed they were not authorized to intervene. In cases where victims have attempted to defend themselves, the Oromia region’s special forces have attacked them. This information points to clear complicity on the part of the government.

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D. Amhara Massacres in Wollega

Several devastating incidents in Wollega have highlighted a pattern of severe human rights abuses against the Amhara community in the Oromia region of Ethiopia. One such incident occurred on November 1, 2020, in Gawa Qanqa, a village in the Guliso District of West Wollega Zone³⁵. As reported by Amnesty International, this atrocity saw the brutal massacre of at least

³² BBC Afaan Oromoo, “Gidaamitti ‘amantoonni sagal waldaa keessaa baafamanii ajjeefaman’ – Waldaa Makaana Yasuus,” published December 1, 2023, accessed March 18, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/afaanoromoo/articles/c6pelpr46e9o>

³³ Justice&Peace4Ethiopia [@JP4Ethiopia]. (2020, August 16). “Translated in English: @amnesty @EthioHRC @humanrights1st @MinorityRights #justice4ethiopia #peace4ethiopia #Justiceandpeace4Ethiopia #Ethiopia”, Twitter, Accessed September 15, 2023, <https://twitter.com/JP4Ethiopia/status/1294864026913169410>, See also, @GurageFirst. (2020, August 4), Twitter, Accessed September 15, 2023, <https://twitter.com/GurageFirst/status/1290682767097892865>

³⁴ Minority Rights Group International, “Recent violence in Ethiopia’s Oromia region shows hallmark signs of ethnic cleansing, says MRG,” published July 22, 2020, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://minorityrights.org/2020/07/22/ethnic-cleansing-romia/>

³⁵ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “Wollega zone: Massacre of civilians,” published November 2, 2020, accessed November 13, 2023, <https://ehrc.org/wollega-zone-massacre-of-civilians/>

54 individuals from the Amhara ethnic group³⁶. This violent assault, allegedly carried out by the OLA, occurred just a day after the Ethiopian Defense Forces' sudden and enigmatic departure from the region. In a desperate bid for safety, local residents pleaded with the departing troops to stay, with some going to the extent of forcibly entering the departing military vehicles, fearing the impending danger³⁷. The circumstances and timing of the military's withdrawal have sparked significant criticism and suspicion, suggesting the involvement of state actors in the orchestration of these massacres.

The attack was marked by its systematic and targeted nature, with assailants focusing on Amhara civilians, specifically women and children³⁸. Victims were forcibly extracted from their homes and herded into a local school. In a harrowing display of intimidation, the attackers showed the gathered victims graphic images of dismembered and decapitated individuals on their phones and laptops, ominously declaring, "Today is your turn" and "You will be finished"³⁹ (our translation). The victims were then made to lie down, after which the assailants indiscriminately fired upon them with automatic rifles.

Similarly, on June 18, 2022, the Amhara community in Wollega within the Oromia region of Ethiopia was brutally slaughtered in what is now known as the Gimbi massacre⁴⁰. The perpetrator was reportedly the OLA terrorist group; however, the armed force has denied responsibility and claims that government forces are responsible for this killing. The victim count is between 400 and 554 people. According to an investigative report by the Amhara Association of America (AAA), 13 people were killed by being burned alive and "in at least two cases, pregnant women had their wombs cut open with a knife."⁴¹ A witness that spoke to Human Rights Watch reports hearing the gunmen say "We are heroes, and no one can escape from us. We will kill you all."⁴² The massacre lasted around 8 hours and government forces did

³⁶ Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: Over 50 ethnic Amhara killed in attack on village by armed group," published November 2, 2020, accessed November 7, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/11/ethiopia-over-50-ethnic-amhara-killed-in-attack-on-village-by-armed-group/>

³⁷ Amhara Media Centre, "ሰበር ዜና - በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ሰብስበው ጨረሷቸው", Youtube, published November 2, 2020, accessed November 15, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrF2QToQeuE> (timestamp: 4:20 to 4:40).

³⁸ Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: Over 50 ethnic Amhara killed in attack on village by armed group," published November 2, 2020, accessed November 7, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/11/ethiopia-over-50-ethnic-amhara-killed-in-attack-on-village-by-armed-group/>

³⁹ Amhara Media Centre, "ሰበር ዜና - በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ሰብስበው ጨረሷቸው", Youtube, published November 2, 2020, accessed November 15, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrF2QToQeuE>

⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch, "Ethiopia: Civilians in Western Oromia Left Unprotected." published on August 31, 2022, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/08/31/ethiopia-civilians-western-oromia-left-unprotected>

⁴¹ Amhara Association of America. (2022). "It Seems Like The Whole Population Is Killed : An Interim Report on the June 18th, 2022 Amhara Massacre in the Tole Kebele, Gimbi Woreda, West Wollega Zone of Ethiopia's Oromia Region by Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) militants.", accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/june-18th-2022-amhara-massacre-in-the-tole-kebele-west-wollega-by-ola>

⁴² Human Rights Watch, "Ethiopia: Civilians in Western Oromia Left Unprotected." published August 31, 2022, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/08/31/ethiopia-civilians-western-oromia-left-unprotected>

not interfere despite the pleas of the people. They claimed they were unable to respond because the roads were closed⁴³. They only appeared hours after the attackers left the area⁴⁴.

On July 4, 2022, just weeks after the Gimbi massacre, the OLA terrorist group committed another massacre in the same region within the Kellem Wollega zone⁴⁵. The victim count is between 150 and 308⁴⁶ people. The modus operandi remained the same, as they targeted and killed members of the Amhara ethnic group. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported that the vast majority of the deceased were children and women⁴⁷. An eyewitness from a nearby town, upon witnessing the aftermath, described the scene as “beyond human comprehension”⁴⁸, noting particularly that “Two-months and three-months old infants [...] were cruelly massacred”⁴⁹. The attack was characterized by the use of a variety of weapons, including bombs, guns, and bladed weapons, suggesting a level of preparation and premeditation. State actors are once again accused of complicity in this massacre, as security forces showed up only hours after the incident.

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This distressing series of massacres—ranging from the Burayu massacre in 2018, the Shashemene massacre in 2020, to multiple incidents in 2020 and 2021 including the Mai Kadra, Metekel, Ataye, Chenna, Kombolcha, and Kobo massacres—bears testament to this ongoing crisis.

E. The Metekel Massacres

From 2020 to 2021, the Metekel Zone in Ethiopia’s Benishangul-Gumuz region became the epicentre of massacres targeting the Amhara community along with other minorities. A notably severe attack took place on the night of December 22, extending into the early hours of December 23, 2020⁵⁰. This assault, suspected to be the work of Gumuz fighters, led to an

⁴³ Amnesty International, “Ethiopia: Authorities must investigate massacre of ethnic Amhara in Tole,” published July 2022, accessed September 6, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/07/ethiopia-authorities-must-investigate-massacre-of-ethnic-amhara-in-tole/>

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ BBC Amharic. “አሮሚያ ክልል: በቁለም ወለጋ ዞን በተፈፀመ ጥቃት ቢያንስ 150 ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዐይን እማኞች ተናገሩ.” published July 5, 2022, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cd1k52n7429o>

⁴⁶ Amhara Association of America, “They attacked us for the simple reason of being Amhara,” published July 10, 2022, accessed November 15, 2023, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/they-attacked-us-for-the-simple-reason-of-being-amhara>

⁴⁷ BBC Amharic. “አሮሚያ ክልል: በቁለም ወለጋ ዞን በተፈፀመ ጥቃት ቢያንስ 150 ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዐይን እማኞች ተናገሩ.” published July 5, 2022, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cd1k52n7429o> “የዐይን እማኞች [...] አብዛኞቹ የጥቃቱ ሰለባዎች የወራት እድሜ ያላቸው ጨቅላ ሕፃናት፣ ሴቶች እና አረጋውያን መሆናቸውን ገልጸዋል” Our translation, “Eyewitnesses reported that most of the victims were infants, women and elderly people”

⁴⁸ *Ibidem* “ከዚያም ወደ ስፍራው ሲደርስ ያየውን ነገር “ከአዕምሮ በላይ ነው” ሲል ገልጾታል።” Our translation, “Once he got there, he described what he saw as ‘Above human comprehension’”

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 7 “የሁለትና የሦስት ወር ሕፃናት፣ [...] በግፍ ተገድለዋል።” Our translation, “Two-months and three-months old infants [...] were cruelly massacred”

⁵⁰ Ethiopian Citizen, “Benishangul Gumuz Crisis: 207 civilians gruesomely slaughtered says Ethiopian rights group,” published December 26, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://www.ethiopiancitizen.com/2020/12/207-civilians-gruesomely-slaughtered-says-Ethiopian-rights-group.html>

estimated 222 fatalities and displaced approximately 40,000 individuals⁵¹. The village was reportedly “surrounded by up to 500 gunmen”⁵² that night who inflicted several hours of terror upon the community. The executions were methodically carried out through the use of firearms, arrows,⁵³ and the deliberate burning of houses as the “armed group shot at residents and set fire to their homes as they lay asleep.”⁵⁴ This brutal massacre followed closely on the heels of another incident that occurred on November 14, 2020, targeting a bus travelling in the zone. During this earlier event, 34 people from the Amhara and Agew communities were killed by Gumuz militiamen⁵⁵. Amnesty International’s analysis of the November incident highlighted that the assailants used the term ‘Qey,’ literally translating to ‘red,’ as an apparent epithet to denote the fair skin colour of the victims, thereby accentuating the ethnically motivated nature of these attacks⁵⁶.

Tragically, these events are far from being isolated. Similar massacres occurred in September 2020, claiming 45 lives⁵⁷, and in October 2020, resulting in at least 14 fatalities⁵⁸. The relentless pattern of violence extended into the following year, with an attack on January 12, 2021, leaving 82 civilians dead and 22 injured⁵⁹. The most recent reports from the region recount yet another atrocity, with 17 more individuals falling victim to these ongoing massacres on July 7, 2023⁶⁰. This indicates the persistence of the persecution faced by the Amhara people in the region.

The testimonies provided by survivors paint a bone-chilling and profoundly disturbing picture of the atrocities committed. The narratives relayed by survivors reveal a spectrum of brutality, encompassing decapitations and dismemberments, as well as the heinous act of cannibalistic

⁵¹ Sky News, “Ethiopia: 222 killed in village massacre as ethnic tensions flare - Red Cross,” published December 23, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://news.sky.com/story/ethiopia-222-killed-in-village-massacre-as-ethnic-tensions-flare-red-cross-12172583>

⁵² Addis Standard, “News Alert: Eyewitnesses say more than 90 killed in fresh attack in Bulen Wereda, Benishangul Gumuz; region cautions civilians to join safe villages,” published December 23, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://addisstandard.com/news-alert-eyewitnesses-say-more-than-90-killed-in-fresh-attack-in-bulen-wereda-benishangul-gumuz-region-cautions-civilians-to-join-safe-villages/>

⁵³ Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO), “Metekel case that requires an immediate, pragmatic, and lasting solution,” December 25, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://ehrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Metekel-case-that-requires-a-quick-pragmatic-and-lasting-solution..pdf>

⁵⁴ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “Benishangul-Gumuz region: Protection of civilians is the primary duty of the government,” published December 24, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://ehrc.org/benishangul-gumuz-protection-of-civilians-is-the-primary-duty-of-the-government/>

⁵⁵ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “Benishangul-Gumuz region: Swift coordinated action important to improve safety and security,” published November 15, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://ehrc.org/benishangul-gumuz-region-swift-coordinated-action-important-to-improve-safety-and-security/>

⁵⁶ Amnesty International, “Ethiopia: At least 100 dead in surge of violence against ethnic minorities,” published December 23, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/12/ethiopia-at-least-100-dead-surge-of-violence-against-ethnic-minorities/>

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ Euronews, “More than 100 killed in latest ethnic massacre in Ethiopia,” published December 23, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://www.euronews.com/2020/12/23/more-than-100-killed-in-latest-ethnic-massacre-in-ethiopia>

⁵⁹ Al Jazeera, “Over 80 civilians killed in latest west Ethiopia attack,” published January 13, 2021, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/13/over-80-killed-in-west-ethiopia-attack-rights-commission>

⁶⁰ Genocide Prevention in Ethiopia [@GPETHiopia]. “Gumuz armed groups have carried out a horrific massacre against ethnic Amharas...” Twitter, July 7, 2023. Accessed November 3, 2023. <https://twitter.com/GPEthiopia/status/1678417364818206720>

consumption of the dead⁶¹. The savagery of these acts did not discriminate, tragically affecting children as well. In a heartrending account shared with Reuters, a witness recounted the discovery of an infant, a mere six months old, who had been brutally slain in her home and “her little body thrown in a field”⁶².

The ongoing violence and massacres in Metekel point to the government’s failure to protect the Amhara community and other vulnerable minorities within the region. Despite persistent appeals for decisive action from both human rights organizations and local inhabitants, governmental responses have been notably insufficient. Disturbingly, eyewitness testimonies suggest a situation that transcends mere negligence. There are allegations indicating possible involvement or tacit approval by regional administration officials in these egregious acts⁶³. These grave allegations cast doubt on the integrity of the regional governance and underscore the urgent necessity to open an investigation and enforce accountability.

It is worth noting that the situation in Metekel has exacerbated the already dire humanitarian situation in Ethiopia, with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) reporting that at least 101,000 individuals have been compelled to flee their homes due to the unrest⁶⁴. Currently, these displaced persons remain within the country’s borders; however, should the turmoil continue, it is likely to influence international migration trends, which are already under strain.

F. Forced Displacement of the Amhara Community

Since January 1, 2023, there have been consistent reports of the government orchestrating discriminatory displacements, targeting primarily non-Oromos, especially Amharas, in the

⁶¹ Amhara Professionals Union, “Call for Accountability and Justice”, published February 14, 2022, accessed September 6, 2023,

<https://www.ambapu.org/sites/default/files/202202/APU%20Press%20Release%20%5B2022-02-14%5D.pdf> p.2, “There have also been reports of cannibalism and drinking the blood of deceased victims [...]” See also, YouTube, “The horrific accounts of the ordeals of Amharas of Metekel, Ethiopia”, by Crimewatch, published on 13 Apr 2021. Unlisted documentary on a massacre, containing extremely graphic content. Between 29 mins:45 secs and 30 mins:32 secs of the documentary, two men testify that acts of cannibalism took place during a massacre. Link available upon request, accessed September 6, 2023. See also, Twitter [@JP4Ethiopia]; posted on October 15, 2020, accessed September 6, 2023, <https://twitter.com/JP4Ethiopia/status/1316549559234031617>

⁶² Reuters, “At least 12 people killed in western Ethiopia,” by Dawit Endeshaw and Giulia Paravicini, published October 13, 2020, accessed November 3, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/article/ozatp-us-ethiopia-violence-idAFKBN26Y1UH-OZATP>

⁶³ Genocide Prevention in Ethiopia [@GP4Ethiopia]. “Gumuz armed groups have carried out a horrific massacre against ethnic Amharas...” Twitter, July 7, 2023. Accessed November 3, 2023.

<https://twitter.com/GPEthiopia/status/1678417364818206720> See also, Justice & Peace for Ethiopia [@JP4Ethiopia]. “Amhara woman describing how the regional forces enforce the ethnic cleansing WITH SUBTITLES.” Twitter, October 15, 2020. Accessed November 3, 2023.

<https://twitter.com/JP4Ethiopia/status/1316549795956359168>

⁶⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Ethiopia: Benishangul Gumuz Region - Flash Update, 6 January 2021,” accessed November 3, 2023, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-benishangul-gumuz-region-flash-update-6-january-2021>

vicinity of the capital⁶⁵. Tens of thousands of houses were demolished in this context⁶⁶. While the government justifies these actions by labelling the houses as “illegal settlements” needed for the “Sheger City” project, their motives come into question. Dr. Teshome Adugna, the mayor of Sheger City, when questioned about the selective nature of these demolitions, responded that they aimed to avoid displacing the “indigenous” people⁶⁷. The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) found that the house demolitions included features of ethnic discrimination⁶⁸. This effectively creates a system of segregation in which certain citizens are accorded more rights than others.

G. The Resurgence of the Massacres in Arsi

The pattern of violence against Christians in Oromia has not abated. The attacks resumed in October 2025, concentrated once again in the Arsi zone, which hosts a Muslim majority population⁶⁹ and which had already been the scene of the November and December 2023 massacres recounted above.

According to church officials, a series of three attacks by unidentified gunmen in October 2025 alone left at least 25 people dead in Arsi.

The first attack occurred in the districts of Guna and Merti in the early hours of October 24, claiming the lives of 17 Christians. An eyewitness reported that the assault felt like an ambush, with gunfire being opened in the dead of the night in the area where Christians lived. He further explained that the assailants were armed with knives as well, indicating that while most victims were hit by bullets, others were stabbed. The eyewitness puts the death toll in his locality alone at 16, and claims the youngest victim was a 2-year-old infant. Most of the victims were buried in a communal grave, with 5 of them being buried in *BalWold* church in a neighbouring area called Negele⁷⁰.

The second attack was perpetrated in the Shirka district in the night from October 27 to 28. Reports show that, while three people were killed, four others were captured and taken hostage. A church official, who wished to remain anonymous for safety reasons, told a national

⁶⁵ Amhara Association of America, “Report on Home Demolitions and Forced Evictions of Amharas in the Newly Established Sheger City Administration of the Oromia Region: A City that Denies Amhara Existence in their Homeland of Ethiopia,” published May 14, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, https://www.amharaamerica.org/files/ugd/e494ca_070ed9eaf6ee49ae82164cb626f34da4.pdf

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁷ EBC, “ብርቱ ወገ፡- በሸገር ከተማ ምስረታ ላይ ከከተማው ከንቲባ ዶ/ር ተሾመ ኢዳኛ ጋር የተደረገ ቆይታ (ክፍል 2) Etv | Ethiopia | News,” published June 20, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZWANsBuTVk&t=301s&ab_channel=EBC

⁶⁸ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “Newly formed Sheger City breaches human rights law: report – The Reporter Ethiopia,” accessed September 15, 2023, <https://ehrc.org/newly-formed-sheger-city-breaches-human-rights-law-report-the-reporter-ethiopia/>

⁶⁹ Joshua Project, “Arsi Oromo in Ethiopia,” accessed February 15, 2026, https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/19652/ET.

⁷⁰ Deutsche Welle (DW) Amharic, “ግድያ ይቆም,” DW, published November 1, 2025, accessed January 15, 2026, <https://www.dw.com/am/ግድያ-ይቆም/a-74585225>.

newspaper that the victims were killed in a “harrowing manner,” explaining that they were forcibly removed from their homes before subsequently being executed⁷¹.

The final attack took place in the Honkolo Wabe district the following night, on October 28, and left five more people dead. While the exact circumstances for this attack are unknown, reports indicate that the five people who were killed were all members of the same family⁷².

When asked about the recent attacks by BBC Amharic, the chief administrator of the Arsi Zone Ibrahim Kedir had denied the atrocities altogether, claiming that the reports were false⁷³.

In spite of this denial, the violence in Arsi continued into the following month. Five farmers who had fled the area in fear after the October attacks were reportedly told by government officials to come back on their farms and harvest their fields. However, on November 4, 2025, as they were sharing lunch after returning from their farm work, the five farmers were shot dead by unknown gunmen⁷⁴. According to the same sources, three other people were kidnapped and their whereabouts are still unknown. A similar attack took place in the Shirka district on November 22, 2025, in which three people were killed, two amongst whom were a father and his son⁷⁵.

Such attacks in the Arsi Zone alone have purportedly taken the lives of 190 people counting from the year 2021⁷⁶. Though the Church has not disclosed the ethnicity of the victims, multiple reports indicate that they belonged to the Amhara community, which is a predominantly Orthodox Christian population⁷⁷. The ECLJ had previously alerted the UN Human Rights

⁷¹ Addis Standard (Amharic), ““በምስራቅ አርሲ ዞን ከ 25 በላይ የሚሆኑ ሰላማዊ ሰዎች በጥቅምት ወር ብቻ ተገድለዋል” ስትል የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተክርስቲያን ገለፅች” published October 29, 2025, accessed February 15, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/Amharic/?p=9739>.

⁷² BBC News Amharic, “በአርሲው ጥቃት እናት እና ሦስት ልጆችን ጨምሮ ስምንት ሰዎች የተገደሉበት ቤተሰብ,” published October 30, 2025, accessed February 15, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c4gwz83p7q5o>.

⁷³ BBC News Amharic, “የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ቤተክርስቲያን መንግሥት ‘የዜጎችን በአይወት የመኖር መብት እንዲያረጋግጥ’ ጠየቀች,” published October 31, 2025, accessed February 15, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c17p9ppg5xqo>.

⁷⁴ Orthodoxy Cognate PAGE, “Orthodox Bloodshed in Arsi: Five More Martyred, Three Abducted in Oromia Region, Ethiopia,” published November 5, 2025, accessed February 15, 2026, <https://web.archive.org/web/20251219104756/http://ocpsociety.org/orthodox-bloodshed-in-arsi-five-more-martyred-three-abducted-in-oromia-region-ethiopia/> (archived from <http://ocpsociety.org/orthodox-bloodshed-in-arsi-five-more-martyred-three-abducted-in-oromia-region-ethiopia/>). See also, Department of Public Relations, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Facebook post, accessed February 15, 2026, https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02BwttfYFYuR6xRrgd2KsXXTGRTesXBYA3e2HcNd2acBLWysqUu7TiGZGtxmCPAA2Gl&id=100068379977850, and Borkena, “At Least Five Killed In A New Attack Against Orthodox Christians In Arsi,” published November 6, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://borkena.com/2025/11/06/ethiopia-at-least-five-killed-in-a-new-attack-against-orthodox-christians-in-arsi/>.

⁷⁵ Togolais Info, “Trois fidèles de l’Église orthodoxe éthiopienne tués lors d’une nouvelle attaque à Arsi,” published November 27, 2025, accessed February 15, 2026, <https://www.togolais.info/trois-fideles-de-leglise-orthodoxe-ethiopienne-tues-lors-dune-nouvelle-attaque-a-arsi/>. See also, Borkena, “Three Followers of Ethiopian Orthodox Church Reportedly Killed in Fresh Attack in Arsi,” published November 22, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://borkena.com/2025/11/22/ethiopia-three-followers-of-ethiopian-orthodox-church-followers-killed-in-fresh-attack-in-arsi/>, see also, YouTube, “MK TV //የወይራ ገነተ ሰማይ ቅድስት አርሲማ ቤተክርስቲያን በምን ምክንያት ተቃጠለ።,” video, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSwFihH3HHM>.

⁷⁶ Addis Standard, “More than 25 Civilians Killed in East Arsi Zone, Oromia, in October, Orthodox Church Says,” published October 29, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/more-than-25-civilians-killed-in-east-arsi-zone-oromia-in-october-orthodox-church-says/>.

⁷⁷ Voice of Amhara, “Another Tragedy in Arsi: Dozens of Amhara Orthodox Christians Killed in Oromia,” published November 11, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://voiceofamhara.com/another-tragedy-in-arsi-dozens-of-amhara-orthodox-christians-killed-in-oromia/>. See also, Amhara Association in Netherlands, “Massacre

Council (UNHRC)⁷⁸ and the UN Office on Genocide Prevention⁷⁹ regarding the critical risks of genocide facing this community.

Unsettlingly, the recent faith-based killings are not solely directed at Orthodox Christians in Arsi, as followers of the Catholic faith in the West Harerge zone of the Oromia region are also being targeted. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Ethiopia (CBCE) has reported that in late October 2025, an attack took place near the Saint Mary Church in which Catholic believers were killed and their property set on fire⁸⁰. The bishops have condemned the incident in the strongest terms but have not provided further details on the issue. The area of West Harerge is known for being particularly hostile to Christians, as abductions for ransom and sporadic killings of Christians have increased in the area in recent years⁸¹. The perpetrators of these massacres remain unknown. The OLA has previously been accused of being responsible for such incidents, but the group has consistently denied committing atrocities, trading accusations with the government⁸².

20

International Reactions to the Arsi Massacres of 2025

This string of gruesome killings in the run-up to the new year has prompted different reactions from multiple actors. On October 29, 2025, the Standing Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) recognized the atrocities, attesting that most victims were Christians who were shot dead or fatally stabbed. The Church also urged the government to intervene in the matter and to fulfill its responsibility of guaranteeing the constitutional right to life as well as the freedom of religion in every corner of the country⁸³.

The Archbishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the Archdiocese of New York made much stronger remarks concerning the incessant massacres of Christians in the country. In his

of Amhara Orthodox Christians in Arsi Reflects Continued Violence in Oromia,” published November 8, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://amharacomunity.nl/massacre-of-amhara-orthodox-christians-in-arsi-reflects-continued-violence-in-oromia/>.

⁷⁸ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), “The ECLJ Submits Critical Report at the UN on the Ongoing Violence in Ethiopia Against Christians in the Amhara Region,” published September 13, 2023, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/hrc/onu--leclj-soumet-une-declaration-ecrite-sur-les-violences-en-cours-en-ethiopie-contre-les-chretiens-amharas?lng=en>.

⁷⁹ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), “Ethnic Violence against Amhara People: the ECLJ Issues Urgent Letter to the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide,” published September 19, 2023, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/un/ethnic-violence-against-amhara-people-the-eclj-issues-urgent-letter-to-the-un-special-adviser-on-the-prevention-of-genocide?lng=en>.

⁸⁰ Catholic Bishops' Conference of Ethiopia, “ከኢትዮጵያ ካቶሊካዊት ቤተክርስቲያን የጳጳሳት ጉባኤ የተላለፈ የንዘን መግለጫ,” published November 5, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://cbce-gs.org/ከኢትዮጵያ-ካቶሊካዊት-ቤተክርስቲያን-የ/>, See also, The Catholic Herald, “Christians Face Rising Persecution in Ethiopia as Attacks Spread Across Oromia,” published November 10, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://thecatholicherald.com/article/christians-face-rising-persecution-in-ethiopia-as-attacks-spread-across-oromia>, and Eurasia Review, “Ethiopia’s Catholic Bishops Condemn Deadly Attack On Parish, Call For Government Protection,” published November 7, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.eurasiareview.com/07112025-ethiopias-catholic-bishops-condemn-deadly-attack-on-parish-call-for-government-protection/>.

⁸¹ YouTube, “MK TV //የወይራ ገነተ ሰማይ ቅድስት ኦርሰማ ቤተክርስቲያን በምን ምክንያት ተቃጠለ።,” video, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSwFihH3HHM>.

⁸² Addis Standard, “OLA blames ‘government proxies’ for recent killings in Arsi, accuses the ruling party of ‘fueling new conflict’,” published November 8, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/ola-blames-government-proxies-for-recent-killings-in-arsi-accuses-the-ruling-party-of-fueling-new-conflict/>.

⁸³ YouTube, “EOTC TV | በምሥራቅ ኦርሰ. ዞን ለተገደሉ ኦርቶዶክሳውያን ከኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋህዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ቋሚ ሲኖዶስ የተሰጠ መግለጫ #eotctv,” video, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTa9Y6mT8B4>.

statement, he boldly stated “Ethiopians today are being slaughtered by knives” and that “This government sponsored slaughter is worsening by the day” adding that “In one word, the land has become hell.”⁸⁴

Other Christian communities have voiced their support as well. The Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches (SCOOC), which is composed of sister Churches to the EOTC, has expressed its dismay at what it described as “indefensible and cowardly attacks.” It has notably expressed solidarity with the Ethiopian Patriarch in asking for an end to this “monstrous barbarity”⁸⁵. Likewise, the general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Rev. Prof. Dr. Jerry Pillay has sent a letter to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church expressing his condolences and describing the atrocities as a “senseless loss of life”⁸⁶.

Reactions have also emerged from the political sphere. Amsalu Kassaw, the Ethiopian-born Republican City Councillor of Aurora, contacted President Trump’s Special Adviser to draw urgent attention to the crisis, stating that “silence is not an option when lives are at risk”⁸⁷. In Europe, Christian members of the Dutch Parliament MP Isa Kahraman of the New Social Contract (NSC) party and MP Don Ceder of the ChristenUnie (Christian Union) party, each submitted written parliamentary questions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding these killings⁸⁸. Their questions called for the investigation of these horrific events and sought clarification on the Dutch government’s response.

Members of the Ethiopian Church in the diaspora also took to the streets to protest against these gruesome killings. On January 9, 2026, priests and believers held a peaceful gathering on the Place du Trocadéro in Paris, holding up signs that read “Stop the killing of priests!” and “Stop the killing of civilians!” Moreover, clergymen of the Ethiopian Church from across Europe have reacted, taking the initiative of writing a joint statement in which they strongly condemned the killings and called for the prompt prosecution of those responsible for what they described as an “ethnic cleansing on Christians.”

⁸⁴ SCOOC (Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches), “Statement of His Eminence Archbishop Petros on the Continued Persecution of Orthodox Christians in Ethiopia,” published January 31, 2026, accessed February 16, 2026, <http://www.scooch.org/statement-of-his-eminence-archbishop-petros-on-the-continued-persecution-of-orthodox-christians-in-ethiopia/>.

⁸⁵ SCOOC, “Statement of the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches on the Massacre of Orthodox Christians in Ethiopia,” published November 20, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.scooch.org/statement-of-the-standing-conference-of-oriental-orthodox-churches-on-the-massacre-of-orthodox-christians-in-ethiopia/>.

⁸⁶ World Council of Churches (WCC), “WCC Letter of Condolences and Solidarity on the Tragic Killings in Arsi Zone, Ethiopia,” published November 13, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/wcc-letter-of-condolences-and-solidarity-on-the-tragic-killings-in-arsi-zone-ethiopia>.

⁸⁷ X (formerly twitter), “በርካታ ዜጎች ሰሞኑን በኢትዮጵያ በአርሲ የተከተለውን የክርስትና እምነትን እና ዘርን ተኮር ግድያ ላይ የደረሰውን ሰቆቃ...,” post, November 13, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, https://x.com/ams_kas/status/1988821698150330414.

⁸⁸ Questions by Member Ceder (Christian Union) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs about killings and abductions of members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in the Ethiopian region of Arsi (submitted November 11, 2025); Answer by Minister Van Weel (Foreign Affairs) (received December 4, 2025),” published December 4, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/ah-tk-20252026-552.html>, see also, Questions by Member Kahraman (New Social Contract) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the killings of Orthodox Christians in Ethiopia (submitted November 11, 2025), no. 2025Z19611, accessed July 8, 2026, <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/kamervragen/detail?id=2025Z19611&did=2025D46064>.

Despite the myriad of international reactions from multiple parties, the killings have not stopped. On December 23, 2025, 19 people, one of whom was a monk, were reportedly killed in an attack in East Wollega, Gida Ayana district of the Oromia region⁸⁹. The attack happened in a village known as “Tega Jigi”, which is known for hosting the Amhara population of the district⁹⁰. The Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party (EPRP), which is a historic political opposition party in the country, has obtained the information that in addition to the loss of life, 562 properties, amongst which we find homes, taverns, and grain warehouses, were reported to be looted and burned⁹¹. This attack happened two days after federal security forces left the area, and regional forces, known as the Oromo special forces, entered the district. Eyewitnesses have claimed that “The special forces kidnap whoever they please and kill who they want with impunity”⁹². The Oromo special forces have been previously accused of using arbitrary state-sanctioned violence. Notably, the ECLJ had reported in 2023 that during the ethnic schism that rocked the EOTC, these forces went into church buildings and fired live bullets, resulting in multiple casualties⁹³.

Unfortunately, the violence persisted in Arsi, particularly in the Shirka district. The bishop of the diocese wrote to the Patriarchate in Addis Ababa to request mediation and to urge that the federal government intervene, after a new round of attacks on February 26, 2026⁹⁴. According to the bishop, the assault began at around 4 a.m. and left 21 people dead, including one clergyman, while eight others were taken to hospital and a further eight individuals reportedly disappeared. He also noted that four people had been killed two days earlier, on February 24, 2026, and that ten Christian homes were burned on the same day. Other reports also mention extensive looting and indicate that movement within the district is currently extremely limited due to heightened tensions⁹⁵. On March 1, 2026, the Standing Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church issued a public statement expressing its grief and once again urging government officials to restore peace in the area and to bring those responsible to justice⁹⁶.

⁸⁹ BBC News Amharic, “በምሥራቅ ወለጋ የተፈጸመ የ19 ሰዎች ግድያ እና በስጋት ውስጥ ያሉት ነዋሪዎች,” published December 31, 2025, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cp80nynk59jo>.

⁹⁰ FSX Business, “Residents Report Massacre and Looting in East Wollega following Armed Assault,” published January 1, 2026, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.fsxbusiness.com/east-wollega-residents-report-massacre>.

⁹¹ Ethiopanorama, “በወለጋ 19 ሰው ተገድሏል።,” accessed February 16, 2026, <https://ethiopanorama.com/?p=293749>. See also: EPRP official page, Facebook post, accessed February 16, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/eprpinfo/posts/pfbid0fRVUKoANdE37xmmVW4Dqud6wXMgu6fUgB8i4d8YRXMAkSp1L761LgB2PwFvKCijcl>.

⁹² *Ibidem*, our translation of “ልዩ ሀይሉ የሚፈለገውን አፍኖ እየጫነ ይወስዳል፤ የቀረውን በማንክሉብኝነት ይገድላል” from the EPRP statement

⁹³ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), “Ethnic schism: A delicate way out of a crisis for Ethiopia,” published February 28, 2023, accessed February 16, 2026, https://eclj.org/religious-autonomy/un/schisme-ethnique--delicate-sorite-de-crise-en-ethiopie?lng=en#_ftn5.

⁹⁴ Department of Public Relations, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Facebook post, accessed March 2, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1236456595310328&set>

⁹⁵ YouTube, “MK TV II ዜና ተዋሕዶ II የቅዱስነታቸው 13ኛ ዓመት በዓለ ሢመት ቅድመ ዝግጅት።,” video, accessed March 2, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMBz-UFpc0g&t=80s>

⁹⁶ YouTube, “EOTC TV | በምሥራቅ አርሲ ሀገረ ስብከት በታጣቂዎች ጥቃት ሕይወታቸው ያለፉ ወገኖቻችን አስመልክቶ ከቋሚ ሲኖዶስ የተሰጠ መግለጫ,” video, accessed March 2, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47IwOpZXoyk>

H. The Election Massacres

Three months later, the violence reached a new scale.

On the morning of Monday, June 1, 2026, as the Ethiopian government conducted highly contested general elections, the parish of Gado Kidist Mariam Church in Shirka district buried two cousins, Genene Tilahun and Murtesa Tilahun. The night before, armed men had come to their house and had stolen their belongings and their livestock. Their bodies were found roughly ten kilometres away from home, beside a road at a place called Mitana Gado⁹⁷.

The cousins were two among many. Between Saturday, May 30 and Monday, June 1, 2026, armed men moved through the East Arsi Zone of Ethiopia's Oromia region and killed Orthodox Christian civilians in their homes, on roads, and as they fled. Furthermore, they burned the century-old Teleta Saint Gabriel Church to the ground⁹⁸. They also looted and then burned the Kara Kuftena Medhane Alem Church⁹⁹. Orthodox Christian households were specifically singled out, with homes set ablaze and properties looted.

On Saturday, May 30, 2026, residents of the rural town of Teleta Chefa observed irregular armed movements. According to the EHRC, local militia members and counter-insurgency forces intervened to deter the suspicious gunmen operating around the area¹⁰⁰. A clash then ensued between the mobilized forces and the irregular armed group. The armed group is alleged, by the EHRC and government sources to be none other than the OLA, although the group denies any involvement in these assaults¹⁰¹.

Fearing an imminent attack on civilians, the residents urgently reported the activity to state security authorities. Local police and administrative officials assured them that the national army would arrive soon. However, the national army never arrived, and their concerns were

⁹⁷ BBC News Amharic, “በምሥራቅ አርሲ ሦስት ወረዳዎች በነዋሪዎች እና በአብያተ ክርስቲያናት ላይ የደረሰው ምንድን ነው?” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cx21vzv4k4z2o>, “በአንድ ቤት ይኖሩ የነበሩ ሁለት የእህት-ማማች ልጆች በጥቃት አድርሾቹ ከተወሰዱ በኋላ ተገድለው መገኘታቸውን ስማቸው እንዳይገለጽ የጠየቁ አካባቢው ነዋሪ ተናግረዋል። የሚገኙት ንብረት እና ከብቶች መዘረፋቸውን በመግለጽ አስር ኪሎ ሜትር ርቆ በሚገኝ ሚታና ጋዶ የሚባል አካባቢ ‘ገድለው ጥለዋቸው ሄደዋል’ ብለዋል። ... የቀብር ሥነ ሥርዓታቸው ግንቦት 24/2018 ዓ.ም. ጋዶ ቅድስት ማሪያም ቤተክርስቲያን መፈጸሙን ተናግረዋል።”, our translation: “A local resident, who asked not to be named, told [BBC] that on the evening of Ginbot 23/2018 [May 31, 2026], two cousins — the children of two sisters who lived together in one house — were taken by the assailants and afterwards found killed in Shirka Woreda of East Arsi. The resident said the victims’ property and livestock had been looted, and that ‘[the attackers] killed them and abandoned them’ in a place called Mitana Gado about ten kilometres away. ... The resident said their funeral was held on Ginbot 24/2018 [June 1, 2026] at Gado Kidist Mariam Church.”

⁹⁸ Addis Standard, “News: ‘Break this chain of attacks and bring the perpetrators to justice’: Patriarch urges action after deadly East Arsi violence,” published June 3, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/news-break-this-chain-of-attacks-and-bring-the-perpetrators-to-justice-patriarch-urges-action-after-deadly-east-arsi-violence/>

⁹⁹ Addis Standard, “News: Several killed as armed attacks ravage East Arsi; Churches burned, residents seek refuge in forests,” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/several-killed-as-armed-attacks-ravage-east-arsi-churches-burned-residents-seek-refuge-in-forests/>

¹⁰⁰ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “ኦሮሚያ፡- በአርሲ ዞን አለባ ወረዳ የደረሰውን የሰብአዊ መብቶች ጥሰቶች በተመለከተ,” published June 7, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://ehrc.org/ኦሮሚያ፡-በአርሲ-ዞን-አለባ-ወረዳ-የደረሰ/>

¹⁰¹ Oromo Liberation Front / Oromo Liberation Army (@OLF_OLA), official statement of denial concerning the Aseko attack, X (formerly Twitter), published June 4, 2026, accessed June 11, 2026, https://x.com/OLF_OLA/status/2062610847059571169

simply dismissed¹⁰². In the absence of any effective intervention, the population was left exposed and vulnerable to the violence that ensued. This is not an isolated failure as State security actors have, on several occasions, shown similar inaction during previous attacks in the same area¹⁰³. This string of massacres is not novel either but has flared up with renewed intensity since October 2025. The ECLJ had published an extensive article investigating the issue in March 2026.

The next morning, on Sunday, May 31, 2026, the armed men moved through Teleta Chefa and Kara Kuftena. Survivors reported that the assailants carried Kalashnikov rifles and operated both in large, coordinated groups and in smaller mobile units of two or three people¹⁰⁴. The violence was methodical and systematic. Those found at home, including the elderly, were shot or hacked to death where they stood. Those who ran were chased, and if caught, killed. Those who escaped had their houses burned behind them¹⁰⁵. One resident told the BBC that the attackers planted the flag of the OLA in the area as they advanced. “The Christians’ homes have been burned to the ground,”¹⁰⁶ he said, insisting on the religious character of the targeting.

Places of worship were set ablaze in this attack. The 101-year-old Teleta Saint Gabriel Church, a religious landmark that had served successive generations of worshippers, was set on fire. Similarly, in Kara Kuftena, a residence used by church deacons was burned. As violence spread, the wounded survivors began arriving at the Aseko Health Centre for treatment¹⁰⁷. The Deleta Chefa Health Centre, found a few kilometres away, was attacked and looted during the assault¹⁰⁸.

While fleeing this violence, entire families sought refuge in the dense woodlands of the Arba Gugu Forest. The area of Arba Gugu has historically been a site of persecution against Christians in Ethiopia, as evidenced by the early 1990s massacres in which “one hundred fifty-

¹⁰² Addis Standard, “News: Several killed as armed attacks ravage East Arsi; Churches burned, residents seek refuge in forests,” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026,

<https://addisstandard.com/several-killed-as-armed-attacks-ravage-east-arsi-churches-burned-residents-seek-refuge-in-forests/>.

¹⁰³ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “Human Rights Violations Resulting from Attacks in Arsi Zone of Oromia Region,” published March 4, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://ehrc.org/human-rights-violations-resulting-from-attacks-in-arsi-zone-of-oromia-region/>. See also, Borkena, “Orthodox Christians continue to be targeted in Arsi Oromia, at least 37 killed,” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://borkena.com/2026/06/02/ethiopia-orthodox-christians-continue-to-be-targeted-in-arsi-oromia-region-at-least-37-killed/>.

¹⁰⁴ Addis Standard, “News: Several killed as armed attacks ravage East Arsi; Churches burned, residents seek refuge in forests,” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026,

<https://addisstandard.com/several-killed-as-armed-attacks-ravage-east-arsi-churches-burned-residents-seek-refuge-in-forests/>.

¹⁰⁵ BBC News Amharic, “በምሥራቅ አርሲ ሦስት ወረዳዎች በነዋሪዎች እና በአብያተ ክርስቲያናት ላይ የደረሰው ምንድን ነው?” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cx21vzv4z2o>, “በቤታቸው የተገኙትን እየገደሉ፣ የሸሹትን ቤታቸውን እያቃጠሉ ሄደዋል” ብለዋል።, our translation, “They killed those who were found in their homes, and as for those who fled, they burned their houses”

¹⁰⁶ *Ibidem*, “የክርስቲያን ቤት ሙሉ በሙሉ ተቃጥሏል” our translation, “The Christians’ homes have been burned to the ground”.

¹⁰⁷ Addis Standard, “News: Several killed as armed attacks ravage East Arsi; Churches burned, residents seek refuge in forests,” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026,

<https://addisstandard.com/several-killed-as-armed-attacks-ravage-east-arsi-churches-burned-residents-seek-refuge-in-forests/>.

¹⁰⁸ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “Oromia: Concerning Recent Human Rights Violations in Aseko Woreda, Arsi Zone,” published June 7, 2026, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://ehrc.org/oromia-concerning-recent-human-rights-violations-in-aseko-woreda-arsi-zone/>.

four Christians, mainly Amhara, were killed in Arba Guugu”¹⁰⁹. This crime was attributed to the OLF, from which the OLA later splintered. Highlighting the severity of the plight of the survivors, the Archbishop of the area, Abune Elsaie, was quoted saying “Those who survived the attack fled carrying nothing but their faith and identity.”¹¹⁰

Further violence occurred on the day of the elections as well. On Monday, June 1, 2026, the violence expanded beyond the initial geographic confines of Teleta Chefa and Kara Kuftena. Assaults were conducted into at least seven additional administrative units (called Kebeles), including Zedibu, Erecha Saint-Michael, Sunte Mariam, Bogdo Abo, Lencha Oda, Jiso, and Kuas Meda¹¹¹. The assailants were seen advancing from village to village, killing residents and burning their homes. The youngest victim of these killings was Tere Desse, who was 25, and the oldest victim was Amare Belayneh who was 80¹¹². They were both gunned down in their homes.

No federal or regional reinforcements arrived during the critical period of the attacks.

The East Arsi Diocese documented thirteen victims by name. The identity of some of these victims was later confirmed by the EHRC. Among them we find Demrew Abera, aged seventy, Kefalegn Likyelew, fifty-six, Eshete Damena and Ababayehu Dagne, both forty-two, Hailu Nigussie and Semu Abayneh, each seventy years old. Amare Belayneh, eighty and Tere Desse, twenty-five. The list also included Genene Tilahun and Murtesa Tilahun, the two cousins from neighbouring Shirka Woreda. It further incorporated Nigusu Mandefro and Bekele Haile-Mikael from Honkolo Wabe Woreda, as well as a local militia member killed while defending the community¹¹³. Witnesses suggest that the total death toll could very well be above forty¹¹⁴.

¹⁰⁹ Human Rights Watch “Ethiopia: Human Rights Developments,” Human Rights Watch World Report 1993, published January 1993, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/1993/WR93/Afw-01.htm>

¹¹⁰ Abune Elsaie, Archbishop of the Arsi and Somali Region Jigjiga Dioceses, Public Statement on the attacks of May 31 to June 1, 2026 in East Arsi Zone, posted by የአርሲ ሀገረ ስብከት ሚዲያ Miidiyaa Biyya Lallaba Arsii, Facebook, published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/MiidiyaaBiyyaLallabaArsii/posts/pfbid034PNVzURYxREqYyyz1pVMUULrDDiMt cPy3sSKnXdUWQ6kjgSibSW8NQi2kEprwQmjl>, our translation of, “ከጥቃቱ የተረፉት ነዋሪዎችም ይዘውት የሸሹት እምነታቸውንና ማንነታቸውን ብቻ በመሆኑ አሁን ላይ ሜዳ ላይ ወድቀው ይገኛሉ”.

¹¹¹ Abune Elsaie, Archbishop of the Arsi and Somali Region Jigjiga Dioceses, official letter to the Office of the Patriarchate of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church on the attacks of May 31 to June 1, 2026 in East Arsi Zone, posted by የአርሲ ሀገረ ስብከት ሚዲያ Miidiyaa Biyya Lallaba Arsii, Facebook, published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=122115212487225189>.

¹¹² BBC News Amharic, “በምሥራቅ አርሲ ሦስት ወረዳዎች በነዋሪዎች እና በአብያተ ክርስቲያናት ላይ የደረሰው ምንድን ነው?” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/ex21vzv4kz2o>. See also, Addis Standard, “News: Several killed as armed attacks ravage East Arsi; Churches burned, residents seek refuge in forests,” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/several-killed-as-armed-attacks-ravage-east-arsi-churches-burned-residents-seek-refuge-in-forests/>.

¹¹³ Abune Elsaie, Archbishop of the Arsi and Somali Region Jigjiga Dioceses, Public Statement on the attacks of May 31 to June 1, 2026 in East Arsi Zone, posted by የአርሲ ሀገረ ስብከት ሚዲያ Miidiyaa Biyya Lallaba Arsii, Facebook, published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.facebook.com/MiidiyaaBiyyaLallabaArsii/posts/pfbid034PNVzURYxREqYyyz1pVMUULrDDiMt cPy3sSKnXdUWQ6kjgSibSW8NQi2kEprwQmjl>.

¹¹⁴ Addis Standard, “News: Several killed as armed attacks ravage East Arsi; Churches burned, residents seek refuge in forests,” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/several-killed-as-armed-attacks-ravage-east-arsi-churches-burned-residents-seek-refuge-in-forests/>.

The EHRC estimates that a staggering 2,650 residents have been displaced from the area due to the recent massacre¹¹⁵.

Funerals were held on Tuesday, June 2, 2026. Burials were carried out at various churches in the area, often in mass graves¹¹⁶.

The following day, Patriarch Abune Mathias condemned what he called the “brutal martyrdom of the faithful.” Directing his frustration at the security authorities’ ongoing inaction, the Patriarch asked a single, piercing question: “Until when?”¹¹⁷

ECLJ Calls on the UN for Action

The targeted nature of the massacres in Arsi underscores a deliberate religion-based campaign intended to eradicate Orthodox Christians from the area. However, this is not the sole form of persecution Orthodox Christians suffer in Ethiopia. The Amhara region, which is home to the largest Orthodox Christian population in Ethiopia¹¹⁸, is currently in a state of war and the Amhara people around the country remain under a severe threat of genocide¹¹⁹.

Recognizing the escalating severity of these attacks, the ECLJ submitted another urgent letter to the UN Office on Genocide Prevention on June 2, 2026¹²⁰. The communication formally alerted the international body to the grave exactions being committed against both Christians and the Amhara people in Ethiopia. From repeated devastating drone strikes to calculated patterns of cleansing specific areas, the seemingly deliberate eradication campaigns raise profound legal questions and potential liabilities under both the Genocide Convention and the Rome Statute.

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III. State Repression and Military Operations in the Amhara Region

In response to escalating security issues in the Amhara region, Ethiopia’s government instituted a state of emergency on August 4, 2023. Since then, and in the context of the ongoing conflict

¹¹⁵ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “Oromia: Concerning Recent Human Rights Violations in Aseko Woreda, Arsi Zone,” published June 7, 2026, accessed July 9, 2026, <https://ehrc.org/oromia-concerning-recent-human-rights-violations-in-aseko-woreda-arsi-zone/>.

¹¹⁶ BBC News Amharic, “በምሥራቅ አርሲ ሦስት ወረዳዎች በነዋሪዎች እና በአብያተ ክርስቲያናት ላይ የደረሰው ምንድን ነው?” published June 2, 2026, accessed June 9, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cx21vzv4k4z2o>, “ከተገደሉት መካከል ‘አስከሬናቸው ተነሱት ያልተቀበረ አለ’ ያሉት የቤተክርስቲያኑ አገልጋይ ቀሪዎቹ ግን በተለያዩ አብያተ ክርስቲያናት በጅምላ መቀበራቸውን ተናግረዋል።”, our translation, “The church servant, who said that ‘among those killed there are some whose bodies have not been recovered and buried,’ said that the rest were buried collectively at various churches.”

¹¹⁷ Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Patriarchate Head Office, “በፀ-ዕ ወቅዱስ አቡነ ማትያስ ቀዳማዊ ፓትርያርክ ርእሰ ሊቃነ ጳጳሳት ዘኢትዮጵያ ሊቀ ጳጳስ ዘኢኹስም ወእጩ ዘመንበረ ተክለሃይማኖት በአርሲ ሀገረ ስብከት በቤተ ክርስቲያናት እና በአርቶዶክሳውያን ላይ የደረሰውን ጥቃት በማስመልከት አባታዊ መልእክት አስተላለፉ” published June 3, 2026, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://eotceth.org/a/-ብፀ-ዕ-ወቅዱስ-አቡነ-ማትያስ-ቀዳማዊ-ፓትር-14/>.

¹¹⁸ U.S. Department of State, Office of International Religious Freedom, 2023 Report on International Religious Freedom: Ethiopia (Washington, DC, 2024), published June 26, 2024, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/ethiopia/>.

¹¹⁹ Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention, “Active Genocide Alert for Ethiopia – Update 2,” published May 15, 2026, accessed June 11, 2026, <https://www.lemkininstitute.com/active-genocide-alert-1/active-genocide-alert-for-ethiopia---update-2>.

¹²⁰ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), “Ethiopia: Burials on Election Day,” published June 16, 2026, accessed June 24, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/un/ethiopia-burials-on-election-day?lng=en>.

between government forces and Amhara militias, the region has witnessed widespread allegations of human rights violations. Subsequent reports have documented a concerning pattern of drone strikes, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and restrictions on fundamental freedoms. These allegations have raised serious concerns regarding the conduct of military operations, the protection of civilians, and compliance with Ethiopia's obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law.

A. Drone Attacks on Civilians in the Amhara Region

There are several reports indicating the use of drones against civilians in the Amhara region since the declaration of the state of emergency. On Sunday, August 13, 2023, a drone attack was conducted in the central town of Finote Selam in the Amhara region, killing at least 26 civilians and injuring 55 others¹²¹.

While describing his experience in treating the victims of the drone attack, a hospital official informed the AFP news agency that all the individuals who arrived on Sunday were “wearing either casual civilian clothing or Sunday traditional clothes”¹²², indicating that the victims were most likely churchgoers. This attack, however, is far from being an isolated case.

On September 17, 2023, the Ethiopian government reportedly carried out drone strikes in the towns of Kuarit and Dembecha, located in the West Gojjam zone of the Amhara Region¹²³. An eyewitness provided in his testimony that the strikes in the town of Kuarit targeted areas that were notably distant from any active conflict zones. To describe the indiscriminate nature of these strikes, he stated that “peaceful people travelling in large numbers have been targeted”¹²⁴ (our translation). The estimated casualties from the drone strike in Kuarit are 30 civilians. Concurrently, in Dembecha, another drone strike conducted on the same day resulted in the tragic loss of 18 lives.

In a disturbing continuation of aerial attacks on civilians within the Amhara region, another drone strike occurred on October 16, 2023, this time targeting Berehet Woreda. Reports indicate that this assault resulted in the deaths of 35 Amhara civilians¹²⁵, including a 19-month-old

¹²¹ Le Monde with AFP, “Air strike kills at least 26 in Ethiopia’s Amhara,” published August 15, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/08/15/air-strike-kills-at-least-26-in-ethiopia-s-amhara_6093248_4.html

¹²² George Wright, “Ethiopia Amhara: Air strike kills at least 26 in Finote Selam,” BBC News, published August 14, 2023, accessed November 9, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-66502937>

¹²³ Ethiopia Observer, “Air strike kills at least 30 in Dembecha, Quarit,” published September 19, 2023, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.ethiopiaobserver.com/2023/09/19/air-strike-kills-at-least-30-in-dembecha-quarit>

¹²⁴ BBC Amharic, “በምዕራብ ንጃም በተፈጸሙ የድሮን ጥቃቶች ‘ከ30 በላይ ሰላማዊ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን’ ነዋሪዎች ተናገሩ,” published September 19, 2023, accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cv21y38zy71o>. “በብዛት ተሰባስበው ይጓዙ የነበሩ ሰላማዊ ሰዎች ኢላማ ተደርገዋል”

¹²⁵ Amhara Association of America, “Abiy Ahmed Ali Regime’s Drone Strikes: 35 Amhara Civilians Killed, 27 Injured in Berehet Woreda,” published October 17, 2023, accessed November 21, 2023, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/abiy-ahmed-ali-regimes-drone-strikes-35-amhara-civilians-killed-27-injured-in-berehet-woreda>

infant¹²⁶. Shortly after this incident, another drone strike occurred in the region on October 19, 2023, resulting in the death of eight civilians¹²⁷.

The ongoing drone strikes against civilians in the Amhara region have prompted a reaction from the international community. Seif Magango, the spokesperson for the UN Human Rights Office, recently addressed the severity of these incidents in a statement¹²⁸. He pointed out that on November 6, 2023, a drone strike targeted a primary school causing seven casualties, including three teachers. In a separate incident on November 9, 2023, a drone strike occurred at a bus station in Waber town, killing 13 people who were waiting to board a bus. Magango underlined in his statement that “Such attacks may amount to arbitrary deprivation of life under international human rights law.”

Despite the forewarning of the UN Human Rights Office, drone attacks persisted throughout the next years. At about midday on Monday, February 19, 2024, a drone attack hit a truck near the town of Sasit, in the Moja and Wedera district of the North Shewa Zone, Amhara Region¹²⁹. The truck reportedly belonged to a family of Christian pilgrims and was carrying more than fifty passengers home from a baptism celebration at a nearby church. The attack caused the death of at least 30 civilians. The 16 family members attending the baptism of the infant, including his mother, perished in this attack¹³⁰. The child, however, miraculously survived. “God saved him, he was unscathed”¹³¹, says an eyewitness who was stunned by the fact. 20 more people were reportedly wounded, many of whom went to referral hospitals. Three of them, including the driver, unfortunately succumbed to their injuries and died shortly after the attack. The scene of the attack was gruesome, as witnesses explain the most challenging part of retrieving the victims was having to collect their dismembered bodies. Describing the situation, one witness said “it was macabre gathering the remains of the dead, as their hands and legs were scattered around everywhere.”¹³² Another witness who spoke to the BBC claimed the residents had to gather the dismembered body parts in blankets and scarves to keep them together. The drone strike has left the community overwhelmed with grief. “The deceased’s

¹²⁶ Reuters, “Conflict in Ethiopia’s Amhara Kills Dozens, Rights Body Says,” by Dawit Endeshaw, published October 30, 2023, accessed November 21, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/conflict-ethiopia-amhara-kills-dozens-rights-body-says-2023-10-30/>

¹²⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Ethiopia: Violence in Amhara region,” statement by Seif Magango, November 17, 2023, accessed November 17, 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2023/11/ethiopia-violence-amhara-region>

¹²⁹ Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), “Ethiopia: 30 killed, 18 injured in Ethiopian air strike on passenger truck near Sasit, Amhara,” published February 23, 2024, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://aoav.org.uk/2024/ethiopia-30-killed-18-injured-in-ethiopian-air-strike-on-passenger-truck-near-sasit-amhara/>.

¹³⁰ BBC News Amharic, “በአማራ ክልል ሰሜን ሸዋ በደረሰ የድሮን ጥቃት 30 የሚሆኑ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዐይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published February 21, 2024, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cn4nnqjll41o> (English translation by the Amhara Association of America: <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/drone-attack-north-shewa-kills-over-30-people>).

¹³¹ *Ibidem*, our translation of “አሱን [ህጻኑን] እግዚአብሔር አተረፈው፤ ምንም አልተነካም”.

¹³² Ethio Negari, “በአማራ ክልል ሰሜን ሸዋ ዞን በተፈጸመ የድሮን ጥቃት 30 ንጹሃን ተገደሉ,” published February 24, 2024, accessed June 12, 2026, <https://ethionegariamharic.com/2024/02/24/በአማራ-ክልል-ሰሜን-ሸዋ-ዞን-በተፈጸመ-የድሮን-ጥቃት-30-ንጹሃን-ተገደሉ/>, our translation of “እጅና እግራቸው እዚያም እዚህም የተበታተኑ ሚቶችን አስከሬን መሰብሰብ ዘግኛኝ ነበር”.

sister fainted from shock and has not regained consciousness to this moment,” a resident spoke. “Bearing the grief is extremely difficult.”¹³³

Further aerial assaults occurred from October 11 to October 14, 2024, in the city of Mehal Genet (also known as Gergech) in the South Mecha district of North Gojjam Zone. A series of multiple drone attacks, accompanied by helicopter and ground assaults, resulted in the death of over 100 civilians across the four days¹³⁴.

The first strike was conducted on Friday, October 11 and targeted the Mehal Genet Health Centre. Eight people were killed, among them a nine-year-old child and a pharmacist on duty¹³⁵. Patients waiting for treatment were among the wounded. The nearby pharmacy, the adjoining staff houses and neighbouring homes were destroyed by repeated drone attacks throughout the day¹³⁶. The surviving medical staff fled from the city, deserting a medical centre that treated more than 25,000 patients a year. At approximately 5:30 p.m. that day, after the first drone strikes were launched, Fano forces entered the city. This triggered intense fighting that continued for nearly five hours.

In the days that followed this clash, witnesses allege that federal forces indiscriminately “massacred”¹³⁷ several people. In his testimony given to BBC Amharic, a resident claimed that “Unable to reach them [the Fano forces] in time, they [the Ethiopian military] turned their vengeance on the people.”¹³⁸ The government forces allegedly went on a killing spree, going door to door and pulling residents out of their homes and executing them. They also reportedly killed inhabitants from the streets. Accounts indicate that fifteen residents, who were going back home believing the fighting had ended, were shot dead in a sorghum field.

Another eyewitness recounted the state of terror the inhabitants of the city were in during those days. “We all nervously stayed in our homes,” he said, “as we heard the sounds of gunshots and people screaming outside.”¹³⁹

“We would have been better off if we had died like the others”

On November 5, 2024, at approximately 7:10 a.m., a drone strike hit the town of Arge, locally known as Zibist, in South Achefer Woreda of Ethiopia’s Amhara Region. The drone attack reportedly occurred in three consecutive rounds and hit an open-air market, a primary school,

¹³³ BBC News Amharic, “በአማራ ክልል ሰሜን ሸዋ በደረሰ የድሮን ጥቃት 30 የሚሆኑ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዐይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published February 21, 2024, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cn4nnqjll41o>, our translation of, “የሚች አህታቸው ራሷን ስታ ነው እስካሁን ድረስ ያለችው። ሐዘኑን መቋቋም በጣም አስቸጋሪ ነው።”

¹³⁴ Ethiopia Observer, “‘More than a hundred killed’ by drone attack in Amhara region,” published October 20, 2024, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.ethiopiaobserver.com/2024/10/20/more-than-a-hundred-killed-by-drone-attack-in-amhara-region/>.

¹³⁵ BBC News Amharic, “በሰሜን ጎጃም ዞን ድሮንን ጨምሮ በተፈጸሙ ጥቃቶች በርካታ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዐይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published October 18, 2024, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c8elz7gzg8jo> (English translation by the Amhara Association of America: <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/bbc-amharic-attacks-using-drones-have-killed-a-large-number-of-people-in-north-gojjam-zone-accordi>).

¹³⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁷ *Ibidem*., our translation of “ቤት ለቤት እና መንገድ ላይ ፈጽመውታል በተባለ ጥቃት በርካታ ሰዎች “አንደረተሽኑ”.

¹³⁸ *Ibidem*., our translation of “በሰዓቱ እነሱን ማግኘት ስላልቻሉ በቀል ያደረጉት ሕዝቡ ላይ ነው”.

¹³⁹ *Ibidem*., our translation of “የጥይት ድምጽ እና የሰው ጩኸት ስንሰማ ሁላችንም ፈርተን ከቤታችን ሳንወጣ ቆየን”.

and a health centre. They were all situated within a radius of approximately 300 metres of each other¹⁴⁰.

While many airstrikes in the Amhara conflict occurred near active fighting, this one, the interviewed residents claim, happened in an area where there was no active fighting.

The first reported impacts happened at the market that was struck during the early morning hours. The victims of this attack included a pregnant woman, her husband, and their three children, aged between 10 and 17¹⁴¹.

The primary school of the town was then hit. In this strike, at least thirteen children were reported killed while playing a ball game on school grounds.

The health centre of the town was struck in its maternity section. Health workers reported that women receiving pregnancy-related medical care and women in labour were killed. Testimonies cited five pregnant women and two visitors among the dead, while medical staff were also injured.

“When we walked into the room, they were all dead”, claimed a health worker who spoke to Voice of America (VOA) news, “All seven of them”¹⁴². Another testimony described further consequences, including miscarriages among mothers who survived the attack¹⁴³.

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The exact number of fatalities remains difficult to determine due to the conditions in which bodies were recovered. Initial counts by residents and medical personnel identified at least 43 people killed. Further recovery efforts increased the estimates to approximately 50 or more victims¹⁴⁴.

Residents described extensive losses among families, with some households losing several members. One account stated that there was no household in the town unaffected by the consequences of the strike¹⁴⁵.

The number of injured was also significant. A health worker reported that more than 64 people were wounded, including individuals requiring urgent medical attention. Two ambulances transporting severely wounded victims toward a health centre in Durbete were reportedly forced to return after being fired upon by State security forces near Lalibela¹⁴⁶.

The aftermath created additional difficulties for the community. Residents reported that fear of further strikes prevented normal funeral ceremonies. The deceased were transported to Zibist

¹⁴⁰ BBC News Amharic, “በሰሜን ጎጃም በድሮን ጥቃት ነፍሰ ጡር ሴቶችን ጨምሮ 50 የሚሆኑ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዓይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published November 8, 2024, accessed June 15, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c5y3l8vklldlo>, (English translation by the Amhara Association of America, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/bbc-amharic-a-drone-strike-killed-50-people-including-pregnant-women-in-north-gojjam-say-eyewitnesses>).

¹⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴² Voice of America Amharic, “በሰሜን ጎጃም ተፈፀመ በተባለ የድሮን ጥቃት በትንሹ 43 ሰዎች መገደላቸውን ነዋሪዎች ተናገሩ,” published November 12, 2024, accessed June 15, 2026, <https://amharic.voanews.com/a/7861387.html>.

¹⁴³ BBC News Amharic, “በሰሜን ጎጃም በድሮን ጥቃት ነፍሰ ጡር ሴቶችን ጨምሮ 50 የሚሆኑ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዓይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published November 8, 2024, accessed June 15, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c5y3l8vklldlo>

¹⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁶ Voice of America Amharic, “በሰሜን ጎጃም ተፈፀመ በተባለ የድሮን ጥቃት በትንሹ 43 ሰዎች መገደላቸውን ነዋሪዎች ተናገሩ,” published November 12, 2024, accessed June 15, 2026, <https://amharic.voanews.com/a/7861387.html>.

Maryam Church, where a mass burial took place at approximately 6 p.m.¹⁴⁷. Some graves reportedly contained up to fifteen bodies, and, fearing another attack on the funeral gatherings, the burial was conducted without the customary religious rites.

Furthermore, the children who witnessed the attack have been left deeply traumatised by the events. One resident explained that “there is no child who does not tremble at night.”¹⁴⁸ Another described how “many children are in doctor’s offices, taken to monasteries to heal with Holy Water.” The same resident added that the psychological consequences are so severe that “we would have been better off if we had died like the others.”

“Easter didn’t feel like a holiday”

During Passion Week in 2025, the town of Gedeb, located in the Enarj Enawga district of East Gojjam, was struck by a devastating drone attack. That day, residents had gathered near the local primary school to repair its damaged fence, a collective effort involving dozens of community members. One resident present at the scene recalled that “some were cutting down trees, others were driving in nails or cutting rafters, while others held them in place.”¹⁴⁹ At around 11 a.m., while the work was underway, the drone strike hit near the school. Describing the impact, an eyewitness told Agence France-Presse (AFP) that “a drone fired on the crowd and pulverized many people in front of my eyes.”¹⁵⁰ A vehicle driver who helped transport 70 bodies from the site to the burial ground said he believed the final death toll could reach 120. The scale of destruction made identification of the victims nearly impossible. One resident explained that “you couldn’t distinguish individual people. Everything turned black. There was no recognizable human form in the entire area.”¹⁵¹ He added that among the debris, some victims were still alive, rolling on the ground and crying out in pain. Another witness described the aftermath to AFP as “horrific,” saying that “there were heads, torsos and limbs flying everywhere and seriously injured people screaming in pain.”¹⁵²

The government claimed that the strike targeted military positions, arguing that the area was under the control of Fano forces. Mulu Gete, the administrator of Enarj Enawga district, denied that civilians had been killed, stating that “citizens weren’t even killed by ricochet” and dismissing the allegations as “enemy propaganda.” However, eyewitness accounts presented a different picture. Speaking to the BBC, one resident argued that if the victims had been Fano fighters, “we would have found armed people while collecting the dead bodies.” He added that “we differentiate the Fano and the members of the community very well. The Fano move in

¹⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴⁸ BBC News Amharic, “በሰሜን ጎጃም በድሮን ጥቃት ነፍሰ ጡር ሴቶችን ጨምሮ 50 የሚሆኑ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን የዓይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published November 8, 2024, accessed June 15, 2026,

<https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c5y3l8vklldlo>, our translation of, “ብዙ ህጻናት ሐኪም ቤት እና ጸበል ናቸው”

¹⁴⁹ BBC News Amharic, “በምሥራቅ ጎጃም በተፈጸመ የድሮን ጥቃት “ከ100 በላይ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን” የዓይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published on April 23, 2025, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cq80gz2wv4wo>, our translation of, “ባሕር ዛፍ የሚቆርጥ፤ ሚስማር የሚመታ አለ፤ ማገር የሚቆርጥ አለ፤ የሚይዝ አለ”.

¹⁵⁰ RFI, “African armies turn to drones with devastating civilian impact,” by Celia Lebur and Mathieu Rabechault, published July 25, 2025, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/international-news/20250725-african-armies-turn-to-drones-with-devastating-civilian-impact>.

¹⁵¹ Addis Standard, “More than 100 people killed in drone strike in East Gojjam zone, Amhara region; eyewitnesses report civilian casualties,” published April 23, 2025, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/more-than-100-people-killed-in-drone-strike-in-east-gojjam-zone-amhara-region-eyewitnesses-report-civilian-casualties/>.

¹⁵² RFI, “African armies turn to drones with devastating civilian impact,” by Celia Lebur and Mathieu Rabechault, published July 25, 2025, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/international-news/20250725-african-armies-turn-to-drones-with-devastating-civilian-impact>.

groups.”¹⁵³ In the days that followed, fear remained deeply rooted among residents. “Easter didn’t feel like a holiday,”¹⁵⁴ one resident said, while another stated, “We live in extreme fear.”¹⁵⁵ The victims were later buried at Saint George Church in Gedeb.

A few months earlier, in February 2025, another drone strike, this time in the North Shewa Zone of the Amhara region, had reportedly hit a house and killed a pregnant woman, her six-year-old daughter, and a young man¹⁵⁶.

The attacks have not ceased in 2026, as the AAA recorded two drone attacks carried out during the week of May 4, 2026, that reportedly killed at least 11 civilians¹⁵⁷. The same organization documented 25 drone and air strikes across the Amhara region in the month of March 2026 alone, reporting 27 civilian fatalities and 36 civilian injuries¹⁵⁸. Overall, between January and May 2026, 135 aerial strikes were reportedly conducted in the Amhara region, resulting in 217 civilian casualties¹⁵⁹.

The recurrence of such incidents indicates that they are not isolated developments, but rather part of a continuing pattern of aerial attacks against civilians in the Amhara region that breach the principle of distinction. These airstrikes warrant serious and independent investigation.

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B. Extrajudicial and Summary Killings

While drone strikes have been a prominent concern, other grave human rights issues in the Amhara region demand attention. Among these, extrajudicial and summary killings have emerged as a significant and troubling pattern.

On August 18, 2023, Amnesty International claimed to have “received allegations of massacres and casualties in Finote Selam, Bahir Dar and Shewa Robit that merit further investigation.”¹⁶⁰

¹⁵³ BBC News Amharic, “በምሥራቅ ጎጃም በተፈጸመ የድሮን ጥቃት “ከ100 በላይ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን” የዓይን እማኞች ተናገሩ,” published on April 23, 2025, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/cq80gz2wv4wo>.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, our translation of “በዓል ምንም አይመስልም ነበር”

¹⁵⁵ RFI, “African armies turn to drones with devastating civilian impact,” by Celia Lebur and Mathieu Rabechault, published July 25, 2025, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/international-news/20250725-african-armies-turn-to-drones-with-devastating-civilian-impact>.

¹⁵⁶ Human Rights Watch, “World Report 2026: Ethiopia,” published January 13, 2026, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2026/country-chapters/ethiopia>.

¹⁵⁷ Amhara Association of America, “War updates from Amhara Region, Ethiopia – May 4th to 10th, 2026,” published May 11, 2026, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/war-updates-from-amhara-region-ethiopia-may-4th-to-10th-2026>.

¹⁵⁸ Amhara Association of America, “Summary of Amhara War Updates for March 2026,” published May 6, 2026, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/summary-of-amhara-war-updates-for-march-2026>.

¹⁵⁹ Amhara Association of America, “Concern over emerging patterns of genocidal violence by state actors in Amhara Region and surrounding areas of Ethiopia,” published May 27, 2026, accessed June 13, 2026, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/aaa-statement-2026-05-27>.

¹⁶⁰ Amnesty International, “Ethiopian authorities must allow independent investigators, media access to Amhara region,” published August 18, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/08/ethiopia-authorities-must-grant-independent-investigators-media-unfettered-access-to-amhara-region-to-probe-violations-under-state-of-emergency/>

Moreover, a report by The Guardian¹⁶¹ draws attention to accusations against Ethiopian federal troops. These troops are alleged to have committed mass killings and looting in Majete, a town in eastern Amhara. Witnesses describe the soldiers conducting house-to-house searches, forcibly rounding up, and executing unarmed farmers. The estimated death toll from these actions exceeds 70 civilians.

A particularly distressing eyewitness account, provided to The Guardian, sheds light on the brutality of these operations. A resident of Majete recounted how federal troops forcibly entered her home. “We were sitting in our house, locking the doors when the federal troops arrived,” she said. “I hoped they would pass our house when we did not answer their knock. But they broke in and became angry . . . They shot dead my husband in front of me. Then they said to me to bury him, kicking his dead body as if he was not a human being.”

These allegations of extrajudicial killings have been furthermore substantiated by the EHRC. In a report published on September 15, 2023, the EHRC confirmed the occurrence of such incidents in the Amhara region¹⁶². The report details instances where individuals were accused of harbouring Fano fighters or providing them with intelligence, leading to their immediate execution. A particularly disturbing aspect revealed in the report is the systematic nature of these executions, often occurring during door-to-door searches conducted by the Ethiopian National Defense Forces.

Further emphasizing the severity of the human rights crisis in the Amhara region, the EHRC released another significant report on October 30, 2023¹⁶³. This document brings to light a particularly harrowing incident: the killing in *Filseta Debre Maryam* Church of 12 “*Abinet*” students, who are young students of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church¹⁶⁴. This killing is not an isolated incident, but part of a larger pattern of government actions assaulting the sanctity of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and its followers.

The EHRC report also documented other distressing incidents. For instance, in West Gojjam zone in the Amhara region, a man who had been wounded was seeking medical help. Aided by his mother and his sister, he took a Bajaj, a common rural transport vehicle, to reach a health facility. However, government security forces stopped their vehicle on the road. They accused the injured man of being a combatant and executed him. According to eyewitnesses, the security forces then indiscriminately executed his mother, his sister, and the Bajaj driver.

¹⁶¹ The Guardian, “Ethiopian troops accused of mass killings of civilians in Amhara region,” published September 8, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/sep/08/ethiopian-troops-accused-mass-killings-amhara-civilians-region-fano-militia>

¹⁶² Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “አማራ ክልል ከትጥቅ ግጭት ጋር በተያያዘ አደጋዎች እና የሰዎች መገደል,” published September 15, 2023, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://ehrc.org/አማራ-ክልል-ከትጥቅ-ግጭት-ጋር-በተያያዘ-አ/>.

¹⁶³ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “አማራ ክልል ለወራት የቀጠለው የትጥቅ ግጭት እና የሰዎች መገደል,” published October 30, 2023, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://ehrc.org/አማራ-ክልል-ለወራት-የቀጠለው-የትጥቅ-ግጭት>.

¹⁶⁴ Translated by Amhara Association of America, Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “EHRC Press Release: Ongoing Human Rights Violations in Amhara Region’s Armed Conflict,” published October 30, 2023, accessed November 14, 2023, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/ehrc-press-release-ongoing-human-rights-violations-in-amhara-regions-armed-conflict>

On January 29, 2024, in Merawi, a town some 30 kilometres south of Bahir Dar, Fano fighters attacked an Ethiopian army contingent early in the morning and then withdrew, leaving the town to federal forces. Over the next six hours, federal forces shot residents in the streets and during house-to-house searches. The killing fell on the eve of the feast of St. Mary. Many of the residents attempted to plead with the soldiers, as it was the eve of a holy day, but they were unfortunately rounded up and gunned down¹⁶⁵. Estimates of the death toll vary, as the EHRC concluded that government forces had killed at least 45 residents¹⁶⁶, while the non-governmental Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO) put the toll at 89¹⁶⁷. Human Rights Watch, which interviewed twenty witnesses, reported that residents estimated more than 80 people were killed. The European Union, at the time, had voiced its concern and called for an independent investigation into this killing¹⁶⁸. A second wave of executions followed in Merawi on February 24, when up to eight more civilians were killed after another clash in the area.

Regarding the allegations of extrajudicial killings in Merawi, the government insisted its troops had acted in self-defense. However, the soldiers in the area had called a meeting and had acknowledged the death of only four people and the arson of one vehicle¹⁶⁹. Amnesty International, citing those who buried the dead, documented more than 50 killed, and verified footage from its Evidence Lab showing at least 22 bodies clustered along the main road, which soldiers at first refused to let residents collect¹⁷⁰.

A 26-year-old woman told Human Rights Watch that soldiers came into their home as her husband was holding their two-month-old son. “They told him to let our child go,” she said, “and after he did, they shot him right outside the house. After they shot him, they did the same thing to the neighbour.”¹⁷¹ An eyewitness who had travelled to Merawi for the feast described

¹⁶⁵ The Globe and Mail, “Survivors share chilling details of army killings in Ethiopia’s Amhara region,” by Zecharias Zelalem, published February 28, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-survivors-share-chilling-details-of-army-killings-in-ethiopia-amhara/>.

¹⁶⁶ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, “በአማራ ክልል አሳሳቢነቱ የቀጠለው የትጥቅ ግጭት እና በሲቪል ሰዎች ላይ ከሕግ ውጭ የተፈጸሙ ግድያዎች (Extra-judicial killings),” published February 13, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://ehrc.org/ባለማራ-ክልል-አሳሳቢነቱ-የቀጠለው-የትጥቅ/>, see also, Al Jazeera, “Ethiopian forces killed ‘at least 45 citizens’ in Amhara, rights body says,” published February 13, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/13/ethiopian-forces-killed-at-least-45-citizens-in-amhara-rights-body-says>.

¹⁶⁷ Ethiopia Human Rights Council (@hrcoethio), “አስቸኳይ ትኩረት ሚያስፈልጋቸው የሰብዓዊ መብቶች ጉዳዮች የኢሰመጉ ጋዜጣዊ መግለጫ-ጥር 28/2016 ዓ.ም,” post, X (formerly Twitter), published February 6, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://x.com/hrcoethio/status/1754893444894347396/photo/1>.

¹⁶⁸ European External Action Service (EEAS), “Ethiopia: Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments in Amhara,” published February 13, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/ethiopia-statement-spokesperson-latest-developments-amhara_en.

¹⁶⁹ Human Rights Watch, “Ethiopia: Military Executes Dozens in Amhara Region,” published April 4, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/04/ethiopia-military-executes-dozens-amhara-region>.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, see also, Amnesty International, “Ethiopia: Merawi killings should be independently investigated,” published April 12, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/04/ethiopia-merawi-killings-should-be-independently-investigated/>.

¹⁷¹ Human Rights Watch, “Ethiopia: Military Executes Dozens in Amhara Region,” published April 4, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/04/ethiopia-military-executes-dozens-amhara-region>.

soldiers seizing an elderly baker he had known since childhood, famous locally for his large loaves of bread: “They brought him onto the street and shot him in the head”, he said. Another resident recounted witnessing a mother pleading for her son as soldiers took him away. He claims they answered her, “We will also shoot you; go back”. Amnesty International’s regional director, Tigere Chagutah, observed that “mass killings are becoming shockingly common in Ethiopia.”¹⁷²

Earlier killings in the regional capital came into sharper focus in February 2024, when Amnesty International published a briefing titled “We Thought They Would Fight With Those They Came To Fight With, Not With Us”, documenting the extrajudicial execution of at least a dozen civilians in Bahir Dar in August and October 2023¹⁷³. Among the victims were a 55-year-old trader, Aynew Defresh, and his two sons, Kassahun and Abraham, who were shot dead as they walked home from church. When the family called and reached the phone of Aynew Defresh, a man they believed to be a soldier answered and informed them that there had been “a small accident.” In the Seba Tamit neighbourhood, soldiers led the three sons of a 69-year-old man, together with a tenant, out of their home while assaulting them. A witness recalls hearing the order “Don’t leave anyone; shoot all of them”. Their dead bodies were left lying in the street from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon, as family members were prohibited by the soldiers from collecting the deceased. They had to wait until the federal forces left¹⁷⁴.

In an assessment covering June 2024 to May 2025, the EHRC documented dozens of further incidents and warned of “a pattern of systematic abuses driven by vengeance, mistrust, and the breakdown of law and order.” The commission recorded abductions and extrajudicial executions and attributed grave abuses to both warring parties¹⁷⁵.

An alarming atrocity reportedly took place in 2025 at Birakat, in the North Mecha area of West Gojjam, beginning on March 31. After clashes in the area, troops moved through the town house by house, dragging residents into the streets and shooting them. The bodies were left where they fell for hours while soldiers remained in the town. An eyewitness reported by The Economist put the death toll at 56 or more¹⁷⁶. Among the victims, we find women, children and

¹⁷² Amnesty International, “Ethiopia: Merawi killings should be independently investigated,” published April 12, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/04/ethiopia-merawi-killings-should-be-independently-investigated/>.

¹⁷³ Amnesty International, “Ethiopia: ‘We thought they would fight with those they came to fight with, not with us.’ Extrajudicial executions in Bahir Dar by ENDF soldiers,” published February 26, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr25/7696/2024/en/>.

¹⁷⁴ Amnesty International, “Ethiopia: End extrajudicial Executions in Amhara region, bring perpetrators to justice,” published February 26, 2024, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/ethiopia-end-extrajudicial-executions-in-amhara-region-bring-perpetrators-to-justice/>.

¹⁷⁵ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, Annual Human Rights Report (June 2024–May 2025), summarised in DNE Africa, “EHRC: Amhara Clashes Between Government Forces and Fano Claim High Civilian Toll,” published August 5, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://africa.dailynwsegypt.com/ehrc-amhara-clashes-between-government-forces-and-fano-claim-high-civilian-toll/>.

¹⁷⁶ The Economist, “What a massacre reveals about Abiy Ahmed’s Ethiopia,” published May 29, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2025/05/29/what-a-massacre-reveals-about-abiy-ahmeds-ethiopia>.

the elderly. A priest was also reportedly shot outside of his church. This massacre came after a separate but similar incident in January 2025 in which government forces were reported to have executed about 20 civilians on a single day, at two locations, one in the Alefa woreda of Gondar and one in the Kuarit woreda of Gojjam¹⁷⁷.

In its World Report 2026, Human Rights Watch found that the war between federal forces and Fano continued throughout 2025, “with warring parties committing war crimes and other serious abuses”¹⁷⁸.

The Fano forces are also accused of serious crimes. On February 14, 2025, they reportedly abducted 13 teachers for having violated the directives they gave on the closing of schools in the Gonji Qolela district of North Gojjam Zone¹⁷⁹. They required their families to pay a ransom of 50,000 birr (approximately 370 euros) to release them. Furthermore, during renewed fighting in late March 2025, Fano militants reportedly killed five civilians in Merawi, a town in the same zone, among them four teachers and a former mayor of the town¹⁸⁰.

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Addressing allegations of human rights violations by Fano, a notable figure of the movement, Eskinder Nega, had said in September 2023 “I know that there are reports of human rights violations by Fano groups. All of them should be thoroughly investigated by an independent body, and if some are found credible, those responsible held accountable”. He also added, “Fano is about justice and country, but extremism and human rights violations to those ends are intolerable”¹⁸¹. In a letter to the US ambassador, the Amhara Fano National Force, prior to the movement’s later centralization under the current Amhara Fano National Movement, called for the “unhindered access for international human rights organizations—including a United Nations-mandated investigative team—to conduct thorough, impartial investigations into atrocities committed in the region”¹⁸². No such investigation has been initiated as of the writing of this report.

¹⁷⁷ BBC News Amharic, “በአማራ ክልል ሁለት ዞኖች በአንድ ቀን 20 የሚሆኑ ሰዎች መገደላቸውን ቤተሰቦች እና የዓይን አማኞች ተናገሩ,” published January 24, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/articles/c05175z6lnpo>.

¹⁷⁸ Human Rights Watch, World Report 2026: Ethiopia (Events of 2025), published January 13, 2026, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2026/country-chapters/ethiopia>.

¹⁷⁹ Addis Standard, “News: 13 teachers held hostage in Amhara’s North Gojjam Zone for nearly a week; families say ‘Fano militants’ demand 50,000 birr ransom per captive,” published February 18, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/13-teachers-held-hostage-in-amharas-north-gojjam-zone-for-nearly-a-week-families-say-fano-militants-demand-50000-birr-ransom-per-captive/>.

¹⁸⁰ Addis Standard, “News: Civilian casualties surge in conflict-hit Amhara region amid renewed Fano-gov’t clashes; residents report continued fighting,” published March 25, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://addisstandard.com/civilian-casualties-surge-in-conflict-hit-amhara-region-amid-renewed-fano-govt-clashes-residents-report-continued-fighting/>.

¹⁸¹ Jeff Pearce, “The government has much tears and blood on its hands’ — A Brief Exclusive Interview with Eskinder Nega,” Medium, published September 8, 2023, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://jeffpearce.medium.com/the-government-has-much-tears-and-blood-on-its-hands-a-brief-exclusive-interview-with-eskinder-ac6074981292>.

¹⁸² Amhara Association of America, “Official Communication from the Amhara Fano National Force in Response to the Statement Issued by the United States Embassy in Addis Ababa,” published May 23, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/official-communication-from-the-amhara-fano-national-force-to-the-united-states-embassy-in-addis>.

Beyond armed groups, unknown gunmen are accused of hindering aid workers from operating in the region, with the kidnapping of humanitarian personnel becoming a growing concern¹⁸³. On August 14, 2025, an aid worker by the name of Ato Honelegn Fentahun was abducted with his two co-workers by “unidentified armed individuals”¹⁸⁴. At his release, he was in immediate need of medical intervention, and he unfortunately passed away shortly after arriving at the hospital.

C. Mass Arrests

The Amhara community in Ethiopia is facing an escalating wave of mass and arbitrary arrests. In May 2022 alone, the government reportedly detained over 4,500 ethnic Amhara individuals¹⁸⁵. This number surged following the declaration of the state of emergency on August 4, 2023, with claims suggesting that around 14,000 Amhara individuals have since been apprehended¹⁸⁶. Many of these detainees find themselves in makeshift detention centres, with schools being repurposed for this cause. Mothers were seen sitting on the porch of the Dejazmach Wondirad secondary school in Addis Ababa, where many members of the Amhara ethnic group were detained. Anxiously hoping for the possible release of her son, one witness said: “It’s been eleven days since they took him [...] He hasn’t done anything wrong, we’re very confused.”¹⁸⁷

Pictures circulated by Amhara activists allegedly depict detainees held in conditions that violate human rights standards¹⁸⁸, with a notable presence of minors among those incarcerated¹⁸⁹.

Opposition figures were among those targeted: Dessalegn Chanie, a member of parliament for the National Movement of the Amhara (NAMA), was arrested on January 31, 2024, and held until March 14¹⁹⁰, while Amhara opposition politicians detained in the broader August 2023

¹⁸³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Ethiopia - National Access Map (As of 30 August 2025)," ReliefWeb, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://reliefweb.int/map/ethiopia/ethiopia-national-access-map-30-august-2025>.

¹⁸⁴ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), "Statement: IFRC mourns the loss of Ethiopian RC staff member," published August 20, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.ifrc.org/article/statement-ifrc-mourns-loss-ethiopian-rc-staff-member>.

¹⁸⁵ AP News, “Ethiopia’s mass arrests show rift with former Amhara allies,” published June 3, 2022, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/politics-kenya-africa-ethiopia-arrests-324b72c41ce1d991db8ff222e8469887>

¹⁸⁶ APA News, “Security forces arrest thousands of people in Ethiopia’s capital”, published August 8, 2023, accessed September 6, 2023, <https://apanews.net/security-forces-arrest-thousands-of-people-in-ethiopias-capital/>

¹⁸⁷ Ethiopian Reporter / ሪፖርተር ኢትዮጵያ, “በአዲስ አበባ ቤተሰቦቻቸው የታሰሩባቸው ዜጎች ስቃይና እንግልት @ethiopiareporter,” uploaded on August 16, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, https://youtu.be/zMt498_tRLM?t=111.

¹⁸⁸ Twitter, “@_Gojjam” posted on September 10, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, https://twitter.com/_Gojjam/status/1700669248870162667.

¹⁸⁹ Twitter, “@RasAsteraw” posted on September 10, 2023, accessed September 15, 2023, <https://twitter.com/RasAsteraw/status/1700937240933806490>.

¹⁹⁰ Ethiopia Observer, “Dessalegn Chanie arrested,” published February 2, 2024, accessed June 16, 2026, <https://www.ethiopiaobserver.com/2024/02/02/dessalegn-chanie-arrested/>, see also, Human Rights Watch, “Ethiopia: Events of 2024,” Human Rights Watch World Report 2025, published January 16, 2025, accessed June 23, 2026, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/ethiopia>.

crackdown, among them Member of Parliament Christian Tadele and Yohannes Buayalew, remained imprisoned more than a year later.

The most sweeping wave of detentions began on September 28, 2024, when a joint task force of the ENDF and Amhara regional security forces launched region-wide mass arrests. Amnesty International reported that thousands of civilians were rounded up and transferred to four makeshift detention camps in the towns of Dangla, Seraba (Chilga), Chorisa (Kombolcha) and Shewa Robit, with each "cluster" used to hold detainees from specific nearby zones¹⁹¹.

Drawing on interviews with released detainees, their relatives and sources familiar with the camps, Amnesty International found that one man freed from the Dangla camp counted roughly 1,610 detainees, with more arriving as he left. To ease the overcrowding, the authorities were building additional cells out of metal sheets, and satellite imagery from October 2024 confirmed new construction at the site. A witness who visited the Chorisa military camp reported at least several hundred people held there. Detainees were taken without warrants. "They broke into my home with a rifle, arrested me in front of my children, and gave no explanation," one former detainee told Amnesty. Several sources described "rehabilitative training" delivered inside the camps by officials of the ruling Prosperity Party, after which detainees were told they would be freed¹⁹².

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The crackdown reached deep into the justice system and the academic world. The Amhara Region Judges Association recorded the arbitrary arrest of 35 judges over the year, most taken in connection with their rulings. A senior prosecutor counted at least 13 prosecutors detained, and 11 academic staff were seized from Wollo University alone. Many were held for weeks without ever being brought before a court¹⁹³.

Releases were partial and slow. Four judiciary workers were freed in October 2024, and in January 2025 authorities released hundreds more, including women, elderly people and detainees with chronic illnesses, yet thousands remained held without charge or trial¹⁹⁴.

The regional director for Amnesty International, Tigere Chagutah, highlighted the dire lack of coverage the mass arrests in the Amhara region have had. He stated that "The international

¹⁹¹ Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: Mass arbitrary detentions in Amhara region deepen erosion of rule of law," published October 1, 2024, accessed June 17, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/10/ethiopia-mass-arbitrary-detentions-in-amhara-region-deepen-erosion-of-rule-of-law/>, see also, Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: End the month-long arbitrary detention of thousands in Amhara Region," published November 6, 2024, accessed June 17, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/11/ethiopia-end-the-month-long-arbitrary-detention-of-thousands-in-amhara-region/>.

¹⁹² Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: End the month-long arbitrary detention of thousands in Amhara Region," published November 6, 2024, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/11/ethiopia-end-the-month-long-arbitrary-detention-of-thousands-in-amhara-region/>.

¹⁹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹⁴ Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: Urgent international action needed to end mass arbitrary detentions in the Amhara Region," published January 28, 2025, accessed June 17, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/01/ethiopia-urgent-international-action-needed-to-end-mass-arbitrary-detentions-in-the-amhara-region/>.

silence over the mass and arbitrary detention of thousands of people in Amhara region is beyond shameful."¹⁹⁵

The arrests have not ceased. The UK Home Office, in a June 2025 country note, recorded that detentions of people suspected of links to Amhara armed groups continued through 2025¹⁹⁶. The AAA monitoring group reported 1,441 arrests among 2,601 civilians it counted as harmed in the region between January and May 2026, across 110 districts and 21 zonal administrations¹⁹⁷. On May 15, 2026, a conference in the Kennedy Caucus Room of the United States Senate pressed for the release of Ethiopia's political prisoners, naming Christian Tadele and historian Tadios Tantu among them¹⁹⁸.

Christian Tadele and Yohannes Buayalew remain the most prominent of those still held. Both were seized from their homes in August 2023. The government has linked them to "terrorism" and to the Fano movement, while their lawyers and Ethiopian opposition figures call the cases politically motivated. Parliament stripped Christian Tadele of his immunity on March 14, 2024, seven months after his arrest¹⁹⁹. At the time he was detained, Tadele chaired the parliamentary audit committee and had moved to audit the Office of the Prime Minister²⁰⁰. By late 2024 their families and lawyers reported that both men were gravely ill. They were reportedly returned to prison soon after surgery and denied the follow-up care their doctors had advised²⁰¹. In May 2026, ahead of the federal elections set for June, the authorities abruptly moved them, with some fifty other long-held detainees, from Kilinto to the Kaliti and Aba Samuel prisons near Addis Ababa²⁰². The AAA monitoring group listed 57 of those transferred to Kaliti on May 10, including both men, and further reported that the detainees were subjected to beatings, shortages of food and water, denial of medical care, inadequate bedding, and restrictions preventing visits by lawyers and family members²⁰³. Neither man has been released, as of June 2026, almost three years after their arrest. Yohannes Buayalew and Christian Tadele remain in prison.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹⁶ UK Home Office, "Country Policy and Information Note: Amhara and Amhara Opposition Groups, Ethiopia," published June 2025, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ethiopia-country-policy-and-information-notes>.

¹⁹⁷ Amhara Association of America, "Concern over emerging patterns of genocidal violence by state actors in Amhara Region and surrounding areas of Ethiopia," published May 27, 2026, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/aaa-statement-2026-05-27>.

¹⁹⁸ Genocide Watch, "The Human Rights Crisis in Ethiopia, May 15, 2026," published May 14, 2026, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://www.genocidewatch.com/single-post/the-human-rights-crisis-in-ethiopia-may-15-2026>.

¹⁹⁹ allAfrica, "Ethiopia: Parliament Revokes Immunity of Christian Tadele Seven Months After His Arrest," published March 14, 2024, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202403140264.html>.

²⁰⁰ Borkena, "Ethiopian Political Prisoners Reportedly Transferred to Kaliti Prison," published May 13, 2026, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://borkena.com/2026/05/13/ethiopian-political-prisoners-reportedly-transferred-to-kaliti-prison/>.

²⁰¹ Borkena, "Jailed Ethiopian Politicians Reportedly in Critical Condition," published December 24, 2024, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://borkena.com/2024/12/24/jailed-ethiopian-politicians-reportedly-in-critical-condition/>.

²⁰² Borkena, "Ethiopian Political Prisoners Reportedly Transferred to Kaliti Prison," published May 13, 2026, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://borkena.com/2026/05/13/ethiopian-political-prisoners-reportedly-transferred-to-kaliti-prison/>.

²⁰³ Amhara Association of America, "Concern over emerging patterns of genocidal violence by state actors in Amhara Region and surrounding areas of Ethiopia," published May 27, 2026, accessed June 22, 2026, <https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/aaa-statement-2026-05-27>.

IV. Legal Assessment

This report does not solely aim at exposing a series of isolated acts of violence, but aims to reveal recurring patterns of attacks targeting civilian populations on the basis of their ethnic and religious identity. The scale, repetition, and nature of the reported violations raise serious concerns under international law.

A. Crimes Against Humanity

The violations documented throughout this report raise serious concerns under Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which defines crimes against humanity as certain prohibited acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

The incidents described above reveal repeated patterns of violence affecting both the Amhara civilian population and Christian communities across Ethiopia. These patterns include extrajudicial killings, enforced displacement, arbitrary detention, persecution, and conflict-related sexual violence.

Numerous massacres documented in Oromia, Benishangul-Gumuz, and the Amhara region involve the intentional killing of civilians on a large scale. Such conduct may fall within the crime against humanity of murder under Article 7(1)(a) of the Rome Statute.

The report also documents the forced displacement of Amhara communities, including large-scale evictions associated with urban development projects and displacement resulting from attacks against civilian populations. These practices may constitute deportation or forcible transfer of population under Article 7(1)(d).

Furthermore, thousands of Amhara civilians have reportedly been subjected to arbitrary arrest and prolonged detention without due process. Such conduct raises concerns under Article 7(1)(e), which prohibits imprisonment or severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law.

Particularly concerning is the recurring targeting of individuals on the basis of their ethnic and religious identity. The repeated attacks against Amhara civilians and Orthodox Christian communities, combined with reports of discriminatory rhetoric and selective violence, may amount to persecution within the meaning of Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute.

Taken together, the documented violations suggest the existence of a widespread and, in certain instances, systematic pattern of attacks against civilian populations that warrants further investigation by competent international mechanisms.

B. War Crimes

The military operations conducted in the Amhara region, documented above, must also be assessed under international humanitarian law. Since 2023, the hostilities between the Ethiopian National Defense Force and Fano armed groups seem to have reached the threshold of a non-international armed conflict (NIAC), triggering the application of Common Article 3 to the

Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the relevant rules of customary international humanitarian law.

International humanitarian law requires the parties to a conflict to distinguish at all times between combatants and civilians, and to direct attacks only against military objectives. The drone and aerial strikes documented in this report, which reportedly struck markets, a health centre, schools, and other civilian areas, raise serious concerns under this principle. Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population, or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities, constitutes a war crime under Article 8(2)(e)(i) of the Rome Statute.

The Ethiopian authorities have at times asserted that such strikes targeted Fano combatants. Even where a military objective is present, however, an attack remains unlawful if it is indiscriminate, if the expected harm to civilians is excessive in relation to the anticipated military advantage, or if the attacking party failed to take the precautions required to spare the civilian population. This is the obligation to the principle of proportionality. The recurrence of strikes causing high civilian casualties across multiple locations and over an extended period is difficult to reconcile with these obligations.

The report further documents summary and extrajudicial killings carried out in the course of these operations, including by federal forces. The killing of persons who are not, or are no longer, taking part in hostilities, is absolutely prohibited by Common Article 3 and may amount to the war crime of murder under Article 8(2)(c)(i) of the Rome Statute.

The destruction of protected objects raises further concerns. Attacks against medical facilities and against buildings dedicated to religion, such as the churches reportedly set ablaze during these events, are specifically prohibited and constitute war crimes under Article 8(2)(e)(ii) and (iv) of the Rome Statute.

Taken together, these incidents indicate that the violations committed in the context of the armed conflict in the Amhara region warrant examination not only as human rights violations, but as serious violations of international humanitarian law capable of engaging individual criminal responsibility before competent judicial mechanisms. This can only be done through thorough and impartial investigation.

C. Risk of Genocide

The documented violations also raise serious concerns under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948.

The Amhara constitute a protected ethnic group under the Genocide Convention. Likewise, Ethiopian Christians, including members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, constitute a protected religious group.

The Convention prohibits, among other acts, killing members of a protected group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction, imposing measures intended to prevent births, and forcibly transferring children.

This report documents numerous incidents involving the killing and the large-scale displacement of Christians. Furthermore, widespread sexual violence, and numerous deadly attacks specifically directed against Amhara communities have also been recorded. Reports concerning conflict-related sexual violence are particularly troubling where victims and witnesses describe conduct intended to destroy family structures, terrorize communities, or prevent the continuation of the targeted group²⁰⁴.

While the existence of genocidal intent can only be determined through a comprehensive legal assessment, several indicators recognised by the United Nations Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes appear relevant in the Ethiopian context. These include repeated attacks against members of a protected group, patterns of discriminatory targeting, widespread impunity, inflammatory rhetoric directed at the Amhara population, and the failure of state authorities to provide effective protection.

In October 2023, the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide publicly warned of a heightened risk of genocide and related atrocity crimes in Ethiopia. Since that warning, reports of mass killings, aerial attacks against civilians, conflict-related sexual violence, and large-scale displacement have continued.

For these reasons, the situation of the Amhara people warrants continued scrutiny under the Genocide Convention and further assessment by relevant international bodies.

D. Violations of Freedom of Religion or Belief

The incidents documented in this report also raise serious concerns regarding the protection of freedom of religion or belief under international human rights law.

Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, including the freedom to manifest one's religion individually or collectively, in public or private, through worship, observance, practice, and teaching. Similar protections are reaffirmed by the 1981 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

The report documents numerous attacks against Ethiopian Orthodox Christians, including the killing of clergy and worshippers, attacks against churches and monasteries, destruction of religious property, and assaults occurring in connection with religious gatherings and worship.

Such acts do not merely affect the physical security of believers. They directly interfere with the ability of religious communities to practice and transmit their faith, maintain places of worship, and preserve their religious identity.

The repeated nature of these attacks, coupled with the limited accountability for perpetrators and the absence of effective protection in several affected areas, raises serious concerns

²⁰⁴ Organization for Justice and Accountability in the Horn of Africa (OJAH) and Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), ““You Will Never Be Able to Give Birth”: Conflict-Related Sexual and Reproductive Violence in Ethiopia” (New York: Physicians for Human Rights, July 2025), p. 42, Table 35, available at <https://phr.org/our-work/resources/you-will-never-be-able-to-give-birth-conflict-related-sexual-and-reproductive-violence-in-ethiopia/>, see also, BBC News, “It would have been better if they'd killed me’: A forgotten war destroying women's lives,” published November 19, 2025, accessed July 8, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx2p8dpw1rwo>.

regarding Ethiopia's compliance with its obligations to protect freedom of religion or belief without discrimination.

Given the central role of Christianity in the identity and cultural life of many affected communities, attacks against Christian civilians and religious institutions must be understood not only as violations of individual rights, but also as attacks on the collective religious life of these communities.

The international community should therefore continue to monitor closely the situation of Ethiopian Christians and ensure that violations of freedom of religion or belief are adequately documented, investigated, and addressed.

V. Recommendations to Remedy the Lack of International Response

Despite the gravity and scale of the atrocities, the international response has been very dim. The International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia, established by the Human Rights Council in December 2021, saw its mandate lapse on October 13, 2023. The ECLJ, for its part, has refused to let the suffering of Ethiopian Christians and of the Amhara pass in silence. We have continuously documented the ethnic and religious dimensions of the violence. We submitted a written statement to the 54th session of the Human Rights Council exposing the systematic persecution of the Orthodox Christians and the Amhara people²⁰⁵. We delivered an oral statement during the Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Experts on 21 September 2023, urging that its investigative work continue and expand its scope²⁰⁶. We addressed an urgent letter to the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, calling for a fact-finding mission and asking her to alert the Secretary-General and the Security Council to the risk of genocide²⁰⁷. We further appealed to the Director-General of UNESCO to protect Ethiopia's endangered Christian heritage²⁰⁸.

In our most recent actions, we wrote a letter to the new UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide Mr. Chaloka Beyani, reiterating our call for an independent investigation, and

²⁰⁵ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), "ONU – L'ECLJ soumet une déclaration écrite sur les violences en cours en Éthiopie contre les chrétiens amharas," published September 13, 2023, accessed June 16, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/hrc/onu--leclj-soumet-une-declaration-ecrite-sur-les-violences-en-cours-en-ethiopie-contre-les-chretiens-amharas?lng=en>.

²⁰⁶ YouTube, "The Amhara's Plight Denounced at the UN," published October 17, 2023, accessed June 16, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/SGVLN1ODTZA>.

²⁰⁷ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), "Ethnic Violence Against Amhara People: The ECLJ Issues Urgent Letter to the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide," published September 19, 2023, accessed June 16, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/un/ethnic-violence-against-amhara-people-the-eclj-issues-urgent-letter-to-the-un-special-adviser-on-the-prevention-of-genocide?lng=en>.

²⁰⁸ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), "The ECLJ Calls on the UNESCO Director-General to Act for the Protection of Ethiopian Christian Heritage," published November 16, 2023, accessed June 16, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/un/the-eclj-calls-on-the-unesco-director-general-to-act-for-the-protection-of-ethiopian-christian-heritage?lng=en>.

asking him to conduct a country visit to Ethiopia²⁰⁹. The ECLJ also organised a conference at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on June 17, 2026, with H.I.H. Prince Asfa-Wossen Asserate, Ph.D., as keynote speaker. The event aimed to present the deteriorating human rights situation in Ethiopia, with particular attention to the Amhara people and Ethiopian Christian communities. During the conference, Prince Asfa-Wossen Asserate warned that Ethiopia is facing a profound political, institutional, and humanitarian crisis, marked by weakened institutions, ethnicized governance, and widespread impunity for grave violations that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, or acts relevant to the assessment of genocide risk. The Prince also devoted significant attention to the plight of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, describing repeated attacks against churches, clergy, and worshippers. He warned that the destruction of one of the world's oldest Christian traditions would not only be an Ethiopian tragedy, but a loss for humanity as a whole. He called for an independent investigation by the United Nations Human Rights Council, stronger international scrutiny, and targeted measures against officials responsible for serious human rights violations²¹⁰.

Given the ongoing severe human rights abuses against the Amhara people in Ethiopia, as detailed in this report, the following recommendations are proposed:

(1) Establishment of an Independent UN Investigation: It is imperative that the United Nations establish an independent and impartial investigation mechanism to thoroughly monitor and examine the human rights violations against the Amhara community. This body should be mandated to collect evidence, document incidents, and provide a detailed assessment of the atrocities, ensuring that the global community is informed and responsive to the crisis.

(2) Ensuring Accountability and Justice: In response to the findings of the UN investigation, there must be a concerted effort to hold perpetrators accountable. This involves initiating fair legal proceedings and trials, ensuring that justice is served for the victims and their families. It is essential that those responsible, irrespective of their status or position, are brought to justice for their actions.

(3) Rigorous Verification of Human Rights Conditionality by the European Union: The European Union must thoroughly verify and enforce its human rights conditionality before deepening any cooperation, trade, or financial engagement with the Government of Ethiopia. EU partnership agreements, development assistance, and budget support are bound by the "essential elements" human rights clause. The Union should not normalize relations, resume budget support, or extend trade preferences while credible evidence of atrocities against civilians persists. The EU should set clear, measurable benchmarks tied to the cessation of violations, unhindered humanitarian and independent investigative access, and genuine accountability, and it should suspend or withhold these privileges wherever such conditions are not met.

²⁰⁹ European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ), "Ethiopia: Burials on Election Day," published June 16, 2026, accessed June 24, 2026, <https://eclj.org/geopolitics/un/ethiopia-burials-on-election-day?lng=en>.

²¹⁰ ECLJ Official, "The Silent Suffering of the Amhara," YouTube, published June 17, 2026, accessed June 24, 2026, <https://www.youtube.com/live/IquK3QLYToQ>.