



Ogaden Youth and Students Union

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Fourth Session of the Forum on Minority Issues

Guaranteeing the rights of minority women

29 and 30 November 2011

Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

Minority women and girls and the right to education

Dear the Chairwomen,

The Ogaden Youth and Students Union (OYSU) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization established to advocate for the rights of the youth, women, student and children in the Diaspora and in the Ogaden.

The illiteracy rate of women and girls in Ogaden is the highest in Ethiopia. Over 90% of Ogaden women are illiterate- a number much higher than non-minority women as well as minority men, This is in part due to the ongoing conflict in the region, In addition, the Ethiopian government's policies towards the Ogaden, including blockades of aid and deliberate strategies of underdevelopment, do not promote education in this region.

Ogaden is a conflict sealed zone where bloody war is fought and the basic human rights including the right of minority women and girls to education is not respected. Any measures to allows girls as well as boys to get education at an early age are absent.

The Ogaden women are mainly pastoralist; cultural norms and a nomadic life create additional barriers to their education. They face severe survival issues, extreme poverty, food and water insecurity and wide spread human rights abuses.

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