

Ogaden Women's Organisation

Respecting minority rights as a means of preventing or mitigating the impact of humanitarian crisis (Leyla)

Dear Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen

The Plight of women and Children are beyond descriptions. Thousands have suffered gang rape, forceful displacement, arbitrary detention and extreme torture. The Ethiopian government use Ogaden women to humiliate and demoralize the Somali people in Ogaden as a weapon of war. The usual denial of women's rights became pale in comparison to what the Ethiopian army did to women in Ogaden.

Thousands of women are in detention in Ogaden and every female detainee is subject to humiliation, rape and torture. The Ethiopian Army used even young women to train recruits on how to rape other women as confirmed by British freelance reporter Graham Peebles who interviewed victims at the Dhadhab refugee Centre in Kenya.

Civilians in the Ogaden are routinely detained illegally, and women and girls constitute most of the detainees. Many torture survivors in refugee camps in Kenya after examination have been found disabled whilst others bore deadly scars of torture on their bodies. We call upon the international community, Human Rights agencies, and the UN to conduct impartial and thorough investigation regarding the rampant rape in Ogaden perpetrated by the Ethiopian army and its associated Liyu Police. We have as much rights as women in other countries to which the international community looks with concern, but our case is ignored.

When women are caught in conflict, children also suffer. Hundreds of children have been adversely affected by the going war in Ogaden. Many children died, more were detained with their mothers and many more are scared for life due to malnutrition and lack of proper care due to the Economic and humanitarian embargo imposed on the civilian population as a collective punishment.

We specifically request the recommendations proposed include strong component for the protection of women and children in Conflict areas.

Finally, we request the forum to support us for:

- The call for an international investigation in the use of rape as a weapon of war in Ogaden
- Support the resolution of the Ogaden conflict through political and peaceful means
- Call for stop to all human rights violation in all regions of Ethiopia

Thank You