



**Sidama National Liberation Front /SNLF/  
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Joint statement from Sidama National Liberation Front and Sidama Human Rights Institute on the establishment of the National Dialogue Commission in Ethiopia.

The Sidama National Liberation Front and Sidama Human Rights Institute have been keenly following the political developments in Ethiopia leading up to the formation of National Dialogue Commission by the government to purportedly facilitate consultations among various stakeholders on issues affecting the country. We fully concur with the importance of genuine and all-inclusive country (multinational as opposed to national) dialogue in Ethiopia involving stakeholders from all nations, nationalities, and peoples to reignite the democratic transition that was aborted in 2018 following the election of the current prime minister and usher in sustainable peace, political stability, and socioeconomic progress.

Nevertheless, we are of the view that a country dialogue process single handedly initiated and managed by the repressive prosperity party led regime in Addis Ababa cannot be independent, transparent, and all-inclusive and credibly address the multifaceted sociopolitical crises facing the country at present. The conveners of the dialogue commission have been selected based on their loyalty to a unitarist ideology and cannot possibly represent the will and aspirations of the majority of the country's nations and peoples. The dialogue process lacks appropriate rules, procedures, clear agenda and implementation plan. The entire process is non-credible. It is a political scheme to legitimize the ongoing campaign by the prosperity party government to dissolve the constitution, dismantle the multinational federalism and re-impose a unitary state. As we have witnessed time and again since 2018, this is a usual dishonest political theater by the prosperity party.

Therefore, we call for a comprehensive and all-inclusive dialogue process to chart a peaceful path for resolving the country's multifaceted political crises. To this effect, we make the following key recommendations:

1. Immediate cessation of hostilities followed by comprehensive ceasefire agreements between the federal government forces and all armed groups in Oromia, Tigray, Benishangul-Gumuz, Amhara, and Afar regional states to create a conducive environment for an all-inclusive political dialogue.
2. Unconditional and unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance, including food and medicine, to all communities affected by conflict—now met with drought-induced starvation — and the re-establishment of vital services, including banking, telecom, transportation, and electricity, to millions of Ethiopians in Oromia, Tigray, Benishangul Gumuz, Afar, Amhara, and Somali regional states.
3. Immediate and unconditional release of all remaining political detainees, including leaders of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF); its Chairman who has been under house arrest since May 2021; thousands of Oromo youth in detention centers and all other detainees incarcerated in the ethnically targeted crackdown under the state of emergency in Sidama, Hadiya and Wolayita.
4. The withdrawal of all foreign forces from Ethiopia, particularly Eritrean security, military, and intelligence units to pave the way for all countries in the region and Ethiopia's bilateral partners to play a constructive role in ending the humanitarian siege and ongoing civil wars.

Finally, we recommend that without independent and impartial commission, facilitating an all-inclusive, participatory, and transparent national dialogue is impossible in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government and many other institutions in the country actively participated and/ or encouraged genocide in Tigray and Oromia regional states. Therefore, none of them can be trusted to lead an all-inclusive and independent country dialogue. Therefore, we call upon the international community to extend its support and play a nonpartisan role to usher in a lasting peace and political stability in the country.

Sidama National Liberation Front

Sidama Human Rights Institute

January 28, 2022.

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