

The June 2018 Massacre of the Sidama Civilians by the Wolayta Security Forces under the Direct Command of Fiseha Garedeu, the South Ethiopia Region Police Commissioner: An Eyewitness Report.

By Gawiwa Ganneesso, From Hawassa, Sidama, Ethiopia, July 04, 2018

I. The Hawassa Massacre of June 2018

The Sidama nation celebrated its 2018 Fichchee and Cambalaalla holidays on 11 and 12 June 2018. Fichchee is a Lunar New Year celebrated by the Sidama nation since ancient times. Fichchee is celebrated in Hawassa, the capital city of Sidama, in a sacred place called Gudumaale. The 2018 Fichchee and Cambalaalla holidays were celebrated peacefully. The Sidama nation unanimously demanded for the restoration of its regional administration in this year's Fichchee and Cambalaalla celebrations. However, when the Sidama youth wearing traditional dresses descended into the Hawassa business districts, the unemployed Wolayta youth gathered from various parts of the country by Fiseha Garedeu and his team pelted the unsuspecting Sidama youth with stones. In addition, the Wolayta security forces supported by the Tigre special forces known as 'Aga'azi' started to indiscriminately beat and shoot at the Sidama youth killing one youth known by the name 'Teshale Yetera' at the Hawassa new market.

The next morning, the Wolayta security forces entered the Hawassa Teachers Training College (TTC) and shot dead two graduating Sidama students inside their residential compound without any provocation. These students are: (1) Dawit Dangamo, and (2) Tesfaye Caala (see Table 1 below).

No	Name	Institution / Place of Birth	Place killed	Killers
1	Buzayehu Kebede	Boona	Hawassa Prison (Beaten to death)	Wolyata Police
2	Bizuneh Marqos	Hawassa	Hawassa Prison (Beaten to death)	Wolayta Police
3	Dawit Dakamo	Hawassa TTC	Hawassa TTC (shot to death)	Wolayta police
4	Tesfaye Caala	Hawassa TTC	Hawassa TTC (shot to death)	Wolayta Police
5	Matewos Dereje	Tobacco Monpoly Hawassa	Tobacco Monpoly (shot dead by Wolayta Agazi member)	Wolayta Agazi Member
6	Teshale Yetera	Hawassa New Market	Hawassa New Market (Shot dead)	Wolayta Police
7	Muluneh	Gaallo Argisa	Killed in Hawassa	Wolayta Police
8	Mulugeta	Hawassa	Killed in his home by Wolayta Special Forces	Wolayta Special Forces
9	More killed to be identified. We will update as we get more names of the massacred.			

Meanwhile the Wolayta Ag'aazi forces who were patrolling in Hawassa shot and killed a young person called Matewos Dereje in Tobacco Monopoly suburb, and Muluneh, a business person from Gaallo Argisa Kebele walking on the streets of Hawassa. Following these killings, few shops and shacks were looted in some poor suburbs of Hawassa.

The Sidama Fichchee and Cambalaalla celebrations have always been peaceful. No conflict or violence has ever occurred during the Fichchee and Cambalaalla celebration in the history of the Sidama nation.

The 2018 unrest was carefully planned and stage managed. It was planned by the following groups:

(1) The TPLF old guard, Abay Tsehaye and the widow of Meles Zenawi, Azeb Mesfin, both of whom were in Hawassa prior and during the Hawassa unrest. Their objective was twofold. First, to destabilize the administration PM Dr. Abiy Ahmed and secondly to block Sidama from reclaiming regional administration.

(2) The second group responsible for the unrest is the Wolayta security forces led by Fiseha Garedeu, an ethnic Wolayta and the Commissioner of South Ethiopia Regional Police. Fiseha Garedeu was also one of the responsible agents for the May 2002 Looqqee massacre of over 70 Sidama civilians. The

Wolaytas believe that they have special rights on Sidamaland because Sidama left them to live in peace on its land for decades. They want Sidama to be removed from Hawassa and the city to be administered by the Federal Government. They demand that they be provided special zone or district status within Hawassa, the Sidama land. That is why Wolayta has been involved in two massacres of Sidama civilians in less than two decades, the 2002 and 2018 massacres. The Wolayta Diaspora in the USA confirmed that they planned and executed the May 2002 massacre of the Sidama civilians with the support of Bereket Simeon, former Ethiopian Federal Government Official.

(3) The third group responsible for the unrest was few Sidama officials aligned to TPLF particularly Sheferaw Shigute who has demonstrated his anti-Sidama stance in the past two decades. He is a close political ally of Abay Tsehaye and Azeb Mesfin.

Following the carefully planned and stage managed unrest, the Wolayta security forces arrested two Sidama young men (1) Bizayehu Kebede and (2) Bizune Marqos and beat both of them brutally to death in Hawassa prison. Both of them were buried in their respective villages in the last week of June 2018. In addition the Wolayta Special Forces entered a house of Mulugeta in Hawassa and shot him dead in his own home (see Table 1).

II. The Shaammana Massacre of Sidama and Oromo Civilians in June 2018

Fiseha Garedeew and his anti-peace team was not limited to Hawassa city in executing their heinous crimes against humanity in Sidama. He armed four Wolayta security officers with hand grenades and sent them to Shaammana to attack civilians on a busy rural market day. In this attack five confirmed civilians have died. Four of these were Sidama and one Oromo (see Table 2). More Oromo people might have been killed as we have limited information on the wounded from the Oromia side. The Shaammana market is on the border between Sidama and Oromia and is frequented by people from both nations.

Table 2: The Sidama and Oromo People Killed in Shaammana Grenade attack by Wolayta Security Forces armed by Fiseha Garedeu, the South Ethiopia Region Police Commissioner, June 2018			
No	Name	Kebele	Nation
1	Niguse Janje	Labu Koromo	Sidama
2	Sanja Gamada	Bakke Lalima	Oromo
3	Gusa Iyuel	Imoseh Huummo	Sidama
4	Riqiwa Yutura	Qajima Umbullo	Sidama
5	Diiga Sirbamo	Shaammana Hurufa	Sidama

The two of the four security officers who detonated grenades in Shaammana have been detained in Hawassa with four more grenades as exhibits. These criminals have confirmed that they were armed by Fiseha Garedeu.

The grenades detonated in Shaammana killed five people and wounded 79 others. Of these, 61 are Sidama and 18 are Oromo. We apologize for not being able to receive the names of the 18 Oromo brothers and sisters wounded from the Oromia Region at the time of compiling this report. The list of the 61 Sidama wounded, 9 of whom are critical condition in Hawassa hospitals, is found below in table 3.

Table 3: The Sidama People Wounded in Shaammana Grenade attack by Wolayta Security Forces armed by Fiseha Garedeu, the South Ethiopia Region Police Commissioner, June 2018

No	Name	Kebele	Sex	Condition
1	Inara Marqos	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Critical in hospital
2	Isayas Petros	Qajima Umbulo	M	Critical in hospital
3	Qenxa Qeyyicha	Shaamman Hurufa	M	Critical in hospital
4	Bayiso Baanata	Qajima Umbulo	M	Critical in hospital
5	Tesfaye Abiro	Qajima Umbulo	M	Critical in hospital
6	Baanata Ba'rassa	Qajima Umbulo	M	Critical in hospital
7	Birage Xossa	Qajima Umbulo	M	Critical in hospital
8	Zelege Isayas	Qajima Umbulo	M	Critical in hospital
9	Digasso Dirfato	Qajima Umbulo	M	Critical in hospital
10	Hocha Bulaado	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
11	Kafala Buraaqo	Qajima umbulo	M	Serious
12	Zelalem Muse	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
13	Nomme Bonja	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
14	Petros Bonja	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
15	Baqqe Balguda	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
16	Iyasu Kooshse	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
17	Yisaq Wondo	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
18	Demissie Wondo	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
19	Ishetu Chula	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
20	Tesfaye Ashenafi	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
21	Ledamo Bonja	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
22	Dingamo Dikisso	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
23	Kafalo Samuel	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
24	Abayneh Henokki	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
25	Ilifyos paulos	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
26	Demissie Riqiwa	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
27	Lanche Shano	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
28	Umura Bache	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
29	Zerihun Baaramo	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
30	Takele Worba	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
31	Ba'rassa Qashure	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious
32	Hosiiso Gowaana	Qajima Umbulo	M	Serious

Table 3: The Sidama People Wounded in Shaammana Bomb attack by Welayta Security Forces armed by Fiseha Garedeu, the South Region Police Commissioner, June 2018 (Continued...)				
No	Name	Kebele	Sex	Conidtion
33	Iyasu Shanana	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
34	Isaya Qacha	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
35	Simeon Gossa	Shaamman Hurufa	M	Serious
36	No'nora Guta	Shaamman Hurufa	M	Serious
37	Darara Riqiwa	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
38	Naadamo Tiibbo	Shaamman Hurufa	M	Serious
39	Adule Kia	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
40	Jagina Haxxiyya	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
41	Maatto Teshome	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
42	Nuure Guta	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
43	Desalegn Bii' no	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
44	Lanchitu Filate	Shaammana Hurufa	F	Serious
45	Kedija Naxasha	Shaammana Hurufa	F	Serious
46	Milisha Selassie	Shaamman Hurufa	M	Serious
47	Isayas Dhiiga	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
48	Adnasu Boshola	Shaammana Hurufa	M	Serious
49	Bisaare Sunkuure	Dooyyo Caale	F	Serious
50	Tumbullo Tummicha	Dooyyo Otlichu	M	Serious
51	Dansa Yandole	Dooyyo Otlichu	M	Serious
52	Garamu Maguya	Dhankaakka Umbulo	M	Serious
53	Mesele Qawaato	Dhankaakka Umbulo	M	Serious
54	Bilxa Faana	Rukeessa Suukke	M	Serious
55	Matewos Teshome	Shaammana Garmaama	M	Serious
56	Teshale Hurisso	Shaammana Garmaama	M	Serious
57	Danawo Taddesse	Gonowa Bullano	M	Serious
58	Abebayehu Xillo	Labu Koromo	M	Serious
59	Desalo Wo'ma	Bakke Laalima	M	Serious
60	Indasha Duube	Dhankaakka umbulo	M	Serious
61	Chunama Boshola	Qajima Umbulo	F	Serious
In addition 18 Oromo brothers and sisters wounded and being treated in Shaashamanne and other Oromia hospitals. Total civilians wounded by the Welayta security forces in Shaammana are 79. More than 9 Sidama in critical condition in Hawassa hospitals.				

III. Massive Arrests of Sidama Civilians following a Stage-managed Unrest in Hawassa.

Over 750 Sidama young Sidama men from Hawassa were rounded up and imprisoned in Doore Baafano prison on the western side of Lake Hawassa after the stage managed unrest. In addition 250 innocent Sidama civilians were arrested from Lako town in Shabadino district for another stage managed looting in which they were never involved. The looting took place by kids who were brought from outside of Shabadino by anti-peace forces narrated above.

The peaceful and brotherly Gurage community clearly understood and acknowledged that no one from Shabadino and Lako looted their property.

These 1000 innocent Sidama are being tortured in prison by Wolayta and their ally Tigre security forces without due legal processes. They must be released unconditionally and immediately. While over 1000 Sidama are languishing in prison, not even a single dozen Wolayta have been arrested although they were the perpetrators of the unrest on Sidama's own land.

IV. Attacks on Sidama University students in Wolayta

In addition to attacking the Sidama people on their own soil in Hawassa and Shaammana, the Wolayta security forces and agent provocateurs attacked our children in Wolayta Sodo University and colleges. One young Sidama female second year student at the Wolayta Agriculture college, whose name is Iyayu Baxiso was thrown from a third floor and was stabbed on the head. She is paralyzed from neck down and in life support machine in hospital as we speak. Two Hawassa college students were killed and the third one in life threatening condition. This is the truth about the ferocious war waged on the Sidama nation by TLF and Wolayta forces.

V. The So-called Displaced Wolayta in Hawassa

We have clearly indicated that the unrest in Hawassa was carefully planned and stage managed by the TPLF old guards, their Wolayta ally, Fiseha Garedew and their Sidama ally, Shiferaw Shigute. It has been proven that the so-called displaced people currently in Hawassa are mostly not the residents of Hawassa. They do not have any identification cards to that effect. The poor, unemployed and homeless Wolayta in various parts of the country were bused to Hawassa to blackmail Sidama of displacing them from Hawassa. They have refused to go back to their homes. They are demanding new land and houses from the Hawassa administration. We can reasonably regard this as a conspiracy of 21st century in Hawassa. It is now clear that this was intended to increase the population of Wolayta in Hawassa for their planned "federal city", "special zone" or "district" in Sidamaland. This will never happen.

VI. Blackmailing Sidama, the Victim, by the Wolayta Diaspora

The Wolayta diaspora has proven unequivocally that they have been part of the TPLF conspiracy to commit massacre on the Sidama nation in May 2002

and again in June 2018. They provided a clear evidence on video in the USA when they met their Tigre Ambassador that they were involved in the Loqqee massacre of the Sidama civilians in May 2002 under the leadership of Bereket Simeon. They were proud that 70 Sidamas were killed on that day. By implication, they are proud that at least 13 Sidamas and Oromos are killed in June 2018 and 79 Sidamas and Oromos are wounded by grenade attack ordered by one of their own, Fiseha Garedeu.

On top of aiding and abetting genocide on the Sidama nation, the Wolayta Diaspora was involved in an outrageous and blatant attack on our culture and heritage, Fichchee and Cambalaalla. They fail to comprehend that Fichchee is a version of a Lunar New Year celebrated by many other ancient nations including China and many other countries in Asia today. It is a scientific calendar determined on the basis of the movement of stars instead of sun. Their hate filled heads believe that Fichchee is a religion or superstition which it is not.

They blatantly deny that Fichchee has been a peaceful celebration in the history of the Sidama nation. They attempt to paint a false picture on our heritage as a violent event, which it never has been. Fichchee and Cambalaalla are New Year days that usher in peace love and harmony in Cushitic Sidama tradition. It has never been associated with violence. Instead, it has been a day in which the quarreled make peace and all living things including animals and plants are taken care of let alone humans. What transpired in 2018 in Hawassa after the Fichchee and Cambalaalla celebration is the stage managed unrest scripted for political manipulation by the TPLF and their Wolayta and a couple of indicated Sidama criminal surrogates.

Fichchee is celebrated on Sidamaland. The Sidama nation did not demand it to be celebrated in Wolayta. What right on earth do the Wolaytas have to demand UNESCO to deregister Fichchee the heritage of the Sidama nation? Is Sidama a protectorate of Wolayta? Is the over 5 million Sidama nation a protectorate of 1.8 million Wolayta people?

VII. The future of Wolayta and Sidama: A Stern Warning

The Wolayta groups in consultation with the faction of TPLF, which is opposed to the PM Dr. Abiy Ahmed's reform agenda, have waged an unprovoked war on Sidama on its land. The Wolayta youth has been abusing

and beating the Sidama elderly women and men when they travel to the old Hawassa market for decades. We have been aware of this and witnessed incidences in several occasions. They used to deny old Sidama women from unloading their goods to sell on the market on their soil. We tolerated this primitive acts to maintain peace and fraternity between the two nations. Simply because few thousand Wolayta lived in Hawassa, Sidamaland, in peace for few decades following the establishment Hawassa in 1960 does not make them the owners of Hawassa, the Sidamaland. This clearly indicates the extent of the contempt they have on the Sidama nation. Therefore, the Sidama nation warns the Wolayta agent provocateurs to:

- 1) Unconditionally desist from interfering on Sidama politics on Sidamaland, in particular, on Sidama Regional Question.
- 2) Desist from claiming special rights on Hawassa, the Sidamaland. You will never ever declare a Wolayta zone or a district within Sidama. Hawassa will never be governed by anyone else except Sidama. The Sidama people will never negotiate about their land on which they lived for thousands of years.
- 3) Unconditionally and immediately, stop blackmailing the Sidama nation and its culture, as it is none of your business.
- 4) If the Wolayta are unhappy about the way the Sidama nation conducts its culture and preserves its heritage they are welcome to leave the Sidamaland.
- 5) If the Wolayta people are interested in peace, they should handover their agent provocateurs to justice and desist from any further destabilization of the Sidama nation. The ball is in their courts.

Gawiwa Gannezzo, From Hawassa, Sidama, Ethiopia, July 04, 2018