

WHAT IS NEXT FOR THE OROMO PEOPLE?

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INTRODUCTION

- The challenge of speculating on the future of the Oromo people
- The Oromo colonial and current history
- The Oromo people are at a crossroads for three overlapping reasons:
- 1) national struggle and its consequences;
- 2) systematic attack and terrorism; and
- 3) absolute poverty, recurrent famines, and malnutrition



INTRODUCTION - 2

- My talk focuses on five central points:
- 1) the past and current status of the Oromo people;
- 2) the major strengths and weaknesses of the Oromo elites;
- 3) the main characteristics of Oromo society;
- 4) the major opportunities and obstacles of the Oromo struggle; and
- 5) urgent measures and practical steps for the survival of Oromia and national victory



THE PAST AND CURRENT STATUS OF THE OROMO PEOPLE

- Colonial terrorism and genocide still continues
- Global imperialism has empowered the Amhara-Tigray state to engage in crimes against humanity
- Oromia "was ploughed by the iron and fire; flooded with blood and the orgy of pillage;"
- The colonization of Oromia involved "the theatre of a great massacre." (Martial De Salviac)
- The Oromo population was reduced from ten to five million



- Colonial terrorism destroyed Oromo institutions such as the gadaa system and Oromian natural resources
- Oromia was "an oasis luxuriant with large trees," and known of its "opulent and dark greenery used to shoot up from soil" (Martial De Salviac)
- The Abyssinian colonialists devastated the forests for their firewood and for building their dwellings



- Five major colonial institutions slavery, the colonial landholding system, the nafxanya-gabbar system, the Oromo collaborative class, and garrison cities;
- most of these institutions still exist
- Colonial terrorism and genocide has continued under successive Ethiopian regimes and destroyed or suppressed independent Oromo leadership and created puppet leadership



- Since 1992, the Tigrayan ethno-fascist regime has been attacking the independent leadership of the OLF and replacing it with the leadership of Oromo mercenaries organized in the OPDO
- The destruction of the leadership of the MTSHA in the 1960s and the OLF in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and currently
- The destruction of independent institutions, organizations, and the media in Oromo society



- The TPLF government tries to give a final solution for a large political problems between the Oromo and Amhara-Tigray colonizers
- Examples of the destruction of indigenous peoples who did not have their states
- The expansion of Finfinnee by evicting Oromos
- Grabbing Oromo lands by Tigrayans, Arabs,
 Chinese, Djiboutians, Indians, Malaysians,
 Nigerians, and Europeans



- If the present colonial policy continues, the Oromo people will be replaced soon by these land grabbers
- The Meles regime is attempting to destroy the Oromo nationhood and use Oromia
- The destruction of millions of Oromo nationalists through torture, rape, murder, and clandestine genocide to make Oromo society leaderless
- The OPDO as "social cancers"



THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE OROMO ELITES

- Ethiopian terrorism destroyed or suppressed the independent Oromo leadership and created the Oromo collaborative class
- The Ethiopian colonial education produced Ethiopianized Oromo leaders to serve as intermediaries, and denied education to the majority of the Oromo population
- The Ethiopian state used cultural assimilation, political marriage, religion, and divide and conquer to disconnect most of the educated Oromos from their cultural and historical roots



THE OROMO ELITES - 2

- A few nationalists emerged from educated Oromos; these nationalists have understood the importance of Oromo history, culture, values, and Oromo resistance to Ethiopian colonialism
- These nationalists started the Oromo national movement by forming MTSA and OLF
- These two organization started development of Oromummaa – national culture, identity and nationalism



THE OROMO ELITES - 3

- Externally political terrorism and the attack on the emerging independent leadership
- Internally political fragmentation, ideological confusion, and multiplicity of enemies
- The political integrity and determination of some OLF leaders facilitated the development and expansion of Oromummaa
- The TPLF has targeted the OLF for destruction



THE OROMO ELITES - 4

- The destruction of the founding fathers of the MTSA and OLF; this created the problem of leadership
- The division among Oromo elites nationalists, Ethiopianists, collaborationists and others
- The division among the OLF leadership
- The inability of the Oromo political leadership to build a unified, structured organization and leadership through force or consensus



THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF OROMO SOCIETY

- The impact of colonialism and Ethiopianism on Oromo culture and identity: 1) Oromoness was targeted for destruction; 2) it survived on personal, interpersonal and clan levels; 3) Oromo national institutions were destroyed; 4) colonial regions and religions were glorified and institutionalized
- Colonial rulers saw Oromoness as a source of raw materials and distorted and used it
- Consequences identity crises and inferiority complex and efforts to be assimilated to other peoples



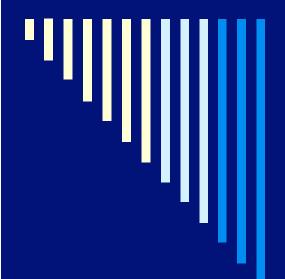
OROMO SOCIETY -2

- The challenge of developing Oromummaa to rebuild the Oromo collective self or national identity without having national institutions
- The confusion between Oromo sub-identities and the Oromo national identity due to uneven development of Oromummaa
- Without the development of the Oromo collective self, it is difficult to build national organizational capacity
- The Oromo elites who did not yet build their Oromo collective selves do not commit themselves to the Oromo national interest



OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINSTS FOR THE OROMO STRUGGLE

- The emergence of the Oromo national movement by a few nationalists in the 1960s and 1970s and its expansion to the populace in the early 1990s
- The resurrection of *Oromummaa;* currently the enemies of our people use the Oromo names, Oromo and Oromia, and *Afaan Oromoo* while attacking Oromo nationalists to curtail the rising wave of *Oromummaa*
- The emergence of the Oromo Diaspora and the connection of the Oromo to the global community



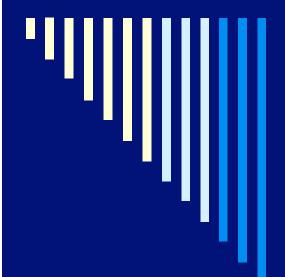
OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS - 2

- The emergence of Oromo intellectuals in the Diaspora to freely express the Oromo national interest
- The emergence of the qubee generation, example, the Oromo student movement in Oromia and the Diaspora



OPPORTUNITIES AND ONSTRAINSTS - 3

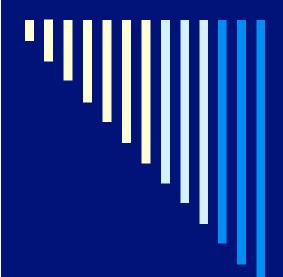
- ➤ The OLF produced fundamental results that have become the cornerstones of the Oromo national struggle without achieving its main objectives
- OLF could not build national intuitions to defend its achievements



OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS -

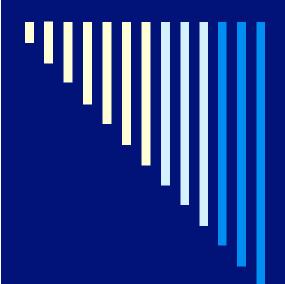
- The inability to secure adequate sympathy and support form the international community
- Oromo political ignorance, the confusion of the Oromo elites, and the lack of political

consensus have allowed the Tigrayan ethno-fascists to terrorize and rule the Oromo



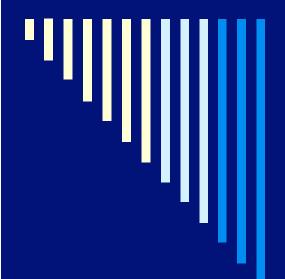
OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINSTS - 5

- The TPLF rules the Oromo not because of its strengths but because of the weaknesses of the Oromo elites and society
- If some Oromos are well organized under one structured organization and leader-ship, they can easily dismantle the Meles regime in Oromia



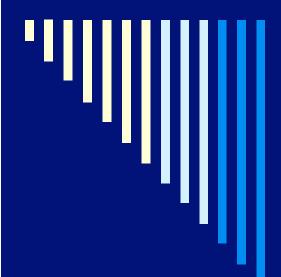
OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS - 6

- The crises of the empire and state that began in the 1970s still continue; both the Amhara and Tigrayan elites have utterly failed to introduce acceptable changes
- The Tirayan government has dug its own grave and the grave of the empire



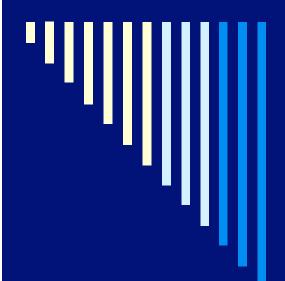
OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS - 7

- Are the Oromo people going to miss the third political opportunity?
- Do Oromo activists and organizations adequately know what is going on?

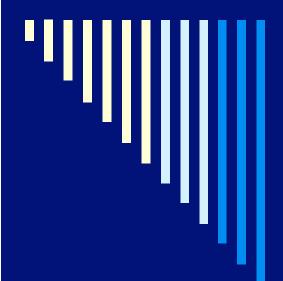


WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE OROMO PEOPLE?

- The future of the Oromo people depends on what Oromo liberation and other political organizations and Oromo society will do
- Are the Oromo elites going to engage in destructive and immature political activities such as clan, regional or religious or collaborative or nominal politics in the name of the Oromo?



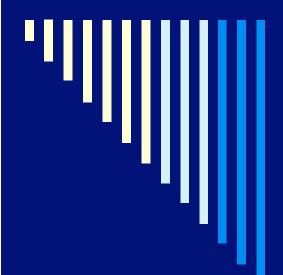
Are the Oromo elites going to maintain a blurred political boundary between the Oromo mercenaries and the Oromo nationalists because of political ignorance and clan and religious affiliation?



Are the Oromo elites and communities going to allow Oromo mercenaries to hide in Oromo families, communities, churches,

mosques to continue attacking the Oromo national struggle from inside?

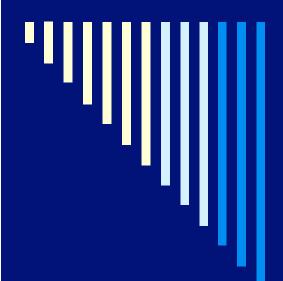
The colonized peoples who could not isolate and defeat their traitors were destroyed around the world



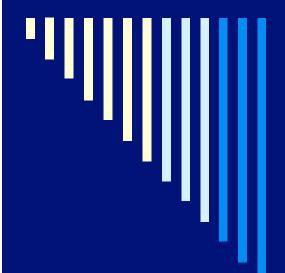
- What should politically conscious Oromos do to determine the future of the Oromo?
- Two strategic goals:
- 1) Focusing on consolidating the Oromo national movement through building a more unified, structured organization and eadership;
 - **2)** Supporting and building the Oromo Liberation Army and self-defense forces



- Twelve specific steps to achieves these goals:
- 1)Engaging in open dialogue and communication in the Diaspora
- 2) openly recognizing and stopping the politics of ignorance and self-destruction and isolating Oromo mercenaries
- > 3) challenging and breaking down artificial barriers among our people, organizations, and associations
- > 4) mobilizing and empowering Oromo women and youth
- > 5) establishing the rule of law fashioning on the principles of *gadaa* and other democratic traditions



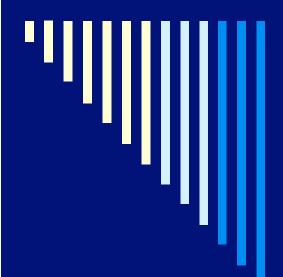
- 6) expanding liberation knowledge and dismantling the knowledge for domination; we must defeat our number one enemy political ignorance; if our people are politically conscious no force on this earth can brutalize them
- 7) unleashing the power of Oromo individuals through liberation knowledge



8) starting to build a Global Gumii Oromiyaa; through this assembly the Diaspora Oromo can contribute ideological, organizational, and financial resources for consolidating the Oromo national movement, the Oromo Liberation Army, and self-defense militia in Oromia



- 9) focusing on the Oromo national interest and the survival and liberation of Oromia and the possibility of building a multinational democracy with other peoples
- ➤ 10) engaging in public diplomacy; every Oromo has historical and moral obligation in the Diaspora to introduce the Oromo people and their country Oromia to the world by any means necessary; every Oromo must win friends for the Oromo nation



- ▶ 11) establishing a well-regulated system to protect our individual and national interests in the Diaspora; we do not have a government that protect our people
- ▶ 12) We must believe that we will liberate ourselves by any means necessary; no force can stop the Oromo "social volcano" that is slowly boiling and erupting.