

## **Where is Amhara's country?**

### **Reminder**

I have used the real identity and names of people which might create some problems since some of those people are well known by the government and the community. Even if I used different names (i.e. changed names) these people will still be known so I have found it important and useful to use their legal names, even though this is my report. A lot of the evidence has been taken from me, which was in my notepad when I was arrested, I have managed to photocopy so even if I changed names or not the document shows clearly that it was written by me.

Traveling through protected areas and different places I gathered a lot of evidence which was taken from me when I was arrested. This report is compiled from using my notes and from my personal recollection

### **Introduction**

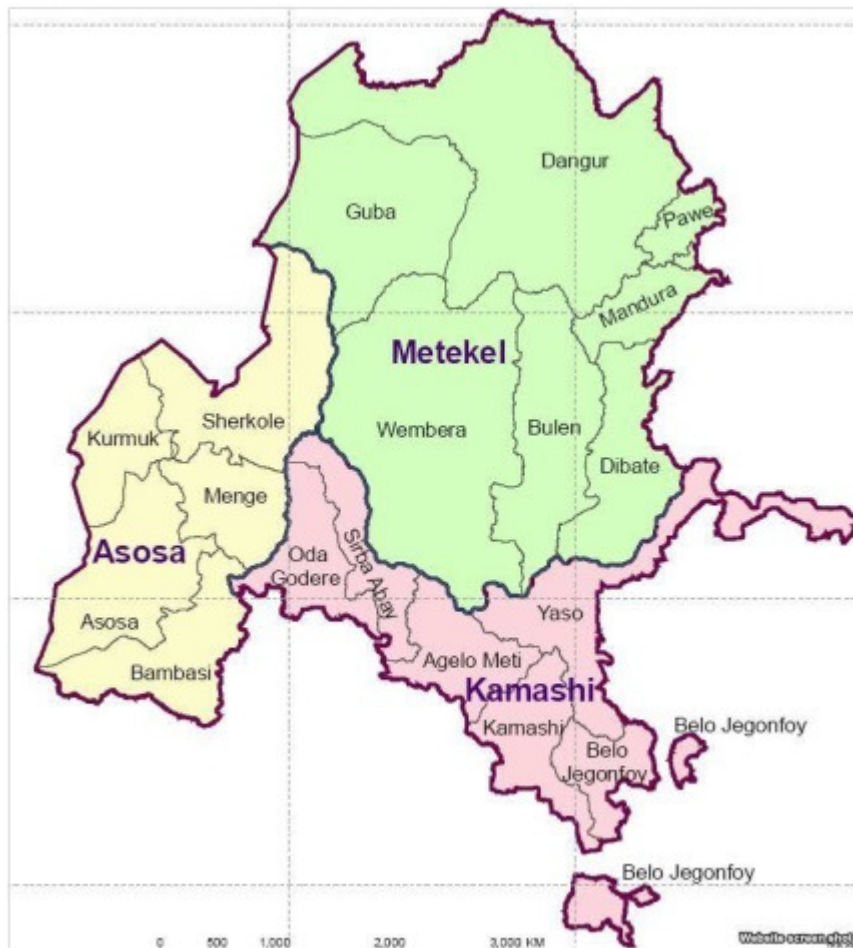
On May 22, 2013 I purposefully posed as an Amharic language speaker to travel to Benishangul Gumuz (region in Ethiopia) and find out about the displaced refugees from that area. My objective was to travel through Benishangul Gumuz area which is located between two zones (Kemash and Metekle) and continue my way through the different districts (Bulen, Bardo, Wenbera, Gilgel Beles) to find out the truth. I decided to travel to Metekle zone specifically to the town of Chagni. In all these areas there have been forced evictions problems which needs to be investigated, but I needed to prioritize and pick a region with the most cases. Since I didn't know anyone in the town of Chagni, I decided to travel to another town with any available transportation. I found a crowded bus travelling to the town of Wenbera. One of the passengers informed me that most of the people were returning to try to salvage whatever possessions were left for them to sell and relocate somewhere else to try to build a stable life.

I, then, decided to start my investigation here and for the next two days I observed many of the farmers frantically looking for any transportation. It was sad to watch the car owners engaged in excessive price gouging and taking advantage of the poor victims.

Once we arrived in Chagni I decided to talk to the refugee day laborers and collect information based on the tips that was given to me by the locals that morning. I stopped for coffee by the Ethiopia Hotel to talk to a group of displaced farmers who have now become day laborers to support themselves. After I finished talking to the group I stopped by a shop to purchase a pre-paid mobile card. The owner was an older muslim gentleman. He noticed that I was not a local and decided to talk to me. The older man asked, "young man did you come from Addis Ababa?" He did not wait for my response when he continued to say that "*your country*" is better than here. I then asked the man "what's the problem here?" Eight of our brothers were taken from the bazaar and jailed. I suggested maybe those that were arrested had broken the law.

He replied that they were the ones who worked around the clock to make the bazaar look good. I said, "what was the problem then?" Their crime was refusing to accept the last "political election" (Islamic Council Election). He said, "life in this country is becoming impossible." The man continued to explain that his Mosque had collected \$175,000 Birr from

the community as contribution for the construction of the Nile River Dam. The government falsely accused them of receiving the money from Al-Qaeda. The exasperated man said, “we don’t know what to do for this government to let us live in peace.” Another man joined us and wanted to know who I was. Once I told them I was a journalist we continued with the conversation. As I was saying goodbye to leave they said that if I stayed for a week I would observe a lot of problems. The shop owner also warned me that if I mentioned his name and something bad happened to him he will put a curse on me. I was very intrigued and disturbed by my conversation with those two men.



Map: In Metekel and Kamashi zones there are cases of Amhara refugee cases the severity being in the Metkel Bulen district and in Kamashi zone Yaso district.

**May 23rd, 2013**

### **The story of two people**

I met these two couple in the town of Chagni town, a 65 year old man known as Father Yeshiwas Tinsaye who works as a day laborer with the Chinese helping mix sand and cement for a small amount of fee and his wife who sells Areke and Tella (alcoholic beverages) to locals. These elderly couple got married in their home town Benishangul Gumuz region of Metkel zone in the Bardo district but since then they have become refugees and have started a new life in the town of Chagni where they both work whatever job is found to make some money to take care of their children’s. These elderly couple close to retirement have lost all

their wealth and are now struggling to find any type of work. When they are telling me this information the man also told me that he will lose his days income for the time he's wasting with me.

In January 2013 Father Yeshiwas decided to submit an application to the Amhara office regarding their case of how they came to this town because they were being accused of the person in charge of organizing the Amhara people in their home town and if they returned they will be killed so they decided to stay for their safety. All the wealth they developed over the years were left behind. Since Father Yeshiwas left their home town without his wife, she was forced to lie to the police and tell them that she divorced him just to stay alive until she can find a way to reunite with her husband. She finally managed to escape to Chagni when the police came to the house and started beating her son Achenef demanding to know the whereabouts of his father.

The other person who told me his story is Ato/Mr. Achameleh Dessie, who had lived in Bardo for 11 years and decided to never return. He rents a small place near Bahir Dar in a small village known as Meshenti but since he can't afford to pay the rent any more he has asked his relatives to provide him with a temporary shelter. He had returned to Chagni to see if he can recover any of his properties. Unfortunately for him he had lost everything and was returning to Baher Dar broken hearted and dispirited.

Mr. Achameleh listed all the property he had lost to me with tearful eyes as follows: many hectares of red peppers, tomatoes, onions and different kinds of vegetables. More than 150 chickens, many cattle, 27 bee hives and crops in the silo. He estimated his total loss excluding the 27 bee hives at roughly \$101,258.00 Birr. Two other people I talked with told me similar

### **Origin of the Problem**

In 1993 a conflict started between light skinned (Amhara) and dark skinned (Benishangul) groups. I have tried to verify this story when I was in prison and by inquiring about it. Locals as well as law enforcement groups have verified that the incident did take place. Since most of the the local people were dark skinned, the light skinned were always considered Amharas. At the time the plan was to clear the region from all Amharas. But accidentally an ethnic Gumuz killed an ethnic Shenasha with an arrow thinking he was Amhara. Ever since that incident a conflict between the Shenasha and the Gumuz people ensued. The conflict is said to have ended when the Amharas in the Powi region claim to have killed the ring leader. There is no factual evidence as to how many people lost their lives, but estimates put those killed in the violence in the thousands. When I was taken to the Police Commission's office for questioning I heard a female inspector talking about her miraculous survival. So I decided to learn more about this conflict.

I was told that every year a small number of Amharas were forced to leave because of this incident. By 2001 in Wellega province more than 14,000 Amharas were dislocated and never returned. In 2003, the Benishangul Gumuz region officials issued a decree ordering all Amharas to leave the region. Many people were beaten and some were killed because they stood up for their rights and refused to leave. For example, Fathert Amare Tessema who served as a bishop in the Metkel zone was tortured by Corporal Belaye Adam an ethnic Shenasha and Constable Getahune Tegenge. They used a wooden stick with nails to puncture his ears and he died in prison from injuries related to these inhumane acts. After this incident

both officers who tortured and caused the priest's death were promoted to the rank of Major and are still employed by the government.

Around this time 300 households came to settle in the town of Chagni. However, the District President Mr. Yaregale Ayesheshum ordered the displaced families to return to where they came from. Some left and some stayed. Currently Mr. Yaregale is in prison in Addis Ababa on corruption charges.

The current problem started on June 15th, 2012 in the Metkel Zone. The District Manager Mr. Gesesse (no known last name) and the Bulen Zone District Manager Mr. Girma (no known last name), called a meeting with a few Amhara citizens. Then on June 21st, 2012 they announced that all Amharas should pay their fertilizer and micro finance loans and leave the area immediately. That announcement created chaos and some disturbance. During the ensuing chaos the Amharas were left with no other option than to sign under duress a document that obligated them to gather their crops and leave the area by February 7, 2013

On November 14th, 2012 the Amharas elected a representative to represent them in the district office in Baher Dar. When the Assistant Manager, Mr. Gedu Andargachew called Asossa office he was told that no such order came from that office. Hence, Ato Gedu told them to return home and care for their crops and that no one is going to evict them.

When the problem began to escalate it started attracting media attention from outside the country, On March 7th, 2013 the VOA-Amharic program aired a news segment about the forced eviction.. Father Yeshiwas were told that he will not be welcome in Bulen. Finally the order was given to evict all Amharas by the end of March 2013 in four rounds. I had a copy of the document with the names of 5, 200 households. The district police confiscated it from me when I was arrested.

The refugees reported their case to various officials including the Chagni City Manager, Guangua District Manager, Awei people's district, Amhara district manager, Ethiopian Human Rights Council, the Civil Right Commission, Federal Affairs Ministry but received no response.

At the end of April 2013 close to 500 refugees in Chagni decided to peacefully protest at which time they were arrested and the video cameras they were using to record the protest was confiscated by the police. Some of the protestors were later released and allowed to return to the area while some left for good.

### **Major Areas of Amaharas Dislocation**

Even though there are problems in all the districts in Metkel zone the only one I saw was in the Bulen Districts although even in Bulen there are problems in all its 19 districts.

1-Aygale Mozambique was very intense. I wanted to go and investigate but I was told that they will kill me with arrows.

2-Bardo, I spent a good amount of time observing

3-Dobi, I also spent a good amount of time observing carefully

4- Bulen, I skimmed through and saw incidents there as well.

5-Apari, I did not visit at all since the districts are few

### **The Loss of Lives and Property**

The loss that took place is hard to verify in the few days I was there. but by just the few looks I had and from the people I talked to, I will try to present the current problems that are taking place and also try to separate the older problems for the current.

#### **A. Before and After Becoming Displaced**

1. Since the Amharas were supposed to be forced to leave starting in December 2012, the children were told to stop attending school. I couldn't guess the number of students that were told to stop attending school but there were many children that didn't attend school and I had the chance to talk to their parents too.

2. A lot of houses were burned to the ground. In Aygale Mozambique district I noticed 7 homes and in Dobi I witnessed 1 house burning.

3. There was a loss of life as well. Two people were who were herding their cows were killed with arrows. When I tried to find out their names I was arrested.

4. People were not allowed to leave with their properties, when they tried selling their cows in the market the people in area were told not to buy them which forced the victims to dump their stuff and flee. In some cases they were forced to sell them for very cheap. Prices. For example a cow that is worth \$ 10,000 Birr will go for \$1,000 Birr. In one case I observed Ato Waleh, a resident of Dobi District was forced to sell his commercial grain mill for \$30,000 Birr. When his family returned they bought the same mill for \$45,000 Birr. He also said he left a 17 room house and when he came back everything was stolen. Another resident of Dobi Father Asmare lost about 7,000 Kilos worth of food product.

5. Property Loss: A lot of people carried what they could and left the rest behind and when they returned they were unable to find their belongings. For example Mr. Achame a resident of Bardo lost about 150 chickens, 27 bee hives, many acres of vegetable garden and other items of value. Mr. Tadele Dagnawe lost 3 of his cows and has no idea what happened to them.

6. The refugees had to pay a large amount of money for transportation so they can leave. For example Mr. Waleh had to pay \$25,000 Birr to transport a refrigerator and some food a short distance to Koso Ber. Many victims were price gouged by unscrupulous transportation drivers.

7. They have become victims to robbery while waiting for transportation, the farmers who were robbed and are now in the Chagni have become homeless beggars. For example Mr. Amogne had 11 well fed cows which he had to sell for \$35,000 Birr and pay \$5000 Birr for transportation so he can leave. He was robbed of the rest of his money he had on him.

8. Families have been dispersed: a lot of families have become impoverished and have become instant beggars. Deacon Mesfin, a local priest was robbed of 8,000 Birr and is now working as a day laborer. According to the refugees there are about 500 head of households in Chagni who are now day laborers.

9. Some of the refugees have become victims of physical abuse. Aba Asmare who lives in Dobi district was beaten up and had to be taken to the hospital for medical intervention.

### **B-After their return, the damage and problem**

1- Land takeover: A lot of the people that returned have lost their land; those who used to rent farmland had the land overtaken by their neighbors. For example Kes ( Priest) Dawit who lived in the Bardo district for 18 years has lost 10 acres of land on which he had paid property taxes for over 16 years. Another person Ato Amogne also has lost 7 acres of land with various crops on it.

2- Physical attack: Ato Kenday Melkamu, a resident of Dobi along with his wife and their son, were severely beaten up and taken to the hospital to recover from their injuries.

3- Selling their products is problematic because some have been denied to renew their sales license and those that go to the license office will be beaten. For example in the Bardo district on May 2013 Mr. Habetamu went to a small diner with Mulugeta Engeda, Getnet Eshetu, and Esubalew Shiferaw they were beaten by Officers Mebratu Desalgne and Demera Teshele.

4- Shopping in local markets has become problematic. On April 20th, 2005 in Dobi town Mr. Asmare's wife was dragged from her car and was about to get hit with an arrow when a crowd of locals screamed at the perpetrators and protected her from harm.

5- There has been an increase in deliberate house burning and robbery of personal properties In Dobi town for the second time, Mr. Asmare was dragged out from his house beaten and robbed of \$60,000 Birr in cash and \$10,000 worth of jewelry and then burned down his house. There are many similar cases such as Mr.Melkamu Kinde who was robbed of \$200,000 Birr and Mr. Alehegne who lived in Dobi town and then disappeared leaving his 7 kids and 27 cows. When I was at the police station in Bulen district an Amhara citizen got robbed of 4 of his cows and the thief was in custody only to be let go with no charges. The victim got 2 of his cows back and lost the other 2. He kept coming back to the station and I ended up talking to him. Finally, after 5 days he realized he will not be getting back his cows or that the thief will not be charged with the robbery. He decided to give up on the matter and relocate with his 2 cows to Mandura district.

1. A lot of the refugees haven't returned. When I was walking through the neighborhoods people will point out the empty house and name the owner. I noticed there were many houses that were locked.
2. The Amhara women were being hassled frequently on their way to get water. For example, Mrs. Werknesh Sewaghene and Mrs. Debre Kassaw were physically assaulted when they were fetching water from the Shar river near Baroda. When they reported these incidents to the local authority they were told that "this is Region 6, it's not Amhara land, therefore, we will not look into Amhara cases".
3. Cows belonging to Amharas were prohibited from grazing on grassland. For example, in Bardo district when two local farmers one Amhara and one Gumuz let their cows into the field, the Amhara farmer was fined \$17,000 Birr by the local authority. Other farmers have been victims of such discriminatory actions.
4. Freedom of movement for Amharas were restricted in Baroda district. They were subjected to curfew and had to be inside their homes from 6:30PM-7:00AM
5. Psychological abuse is being used too, for example during conversations the locals will pick up the soil and rub it in their hands and say this isn't Amhara soil. Other sayings being used are like: Amaras are like rootless trees; you guys are like cattle that are sheltered temporarily that you will be thrown out one day. When I was being held at the Dobi Police Station the policemen were looking in my notepad and were making comments such as "these are unwanted Amharas and we will get rid of them." They were also saying to me that "we should hang you and send a message to all the Amharas." I have observed such behaviors are not confined to the district level. The Inspector at the Region's Police Commission even threatened to charge me with terrorism because I am Amhara.
6. Amhara farmers were routinely denied agricultural support services, fertilizer subsidies and loans to purchase fertilizers.

### **Checkpoints where Amharas were caught in Metkel Zone**

In Zone 5 there are five major checkpoints where Amharas are stopped. At a checkpoint named Kar Kella, women without any identification were sexually assaulted and the men Amharas were forced to pay up to \$1000 Birr just to go in and out. While the problems are less frequent in other areas, the issue remains a problem at Kar Kella.

Kar Kella is a major intersection that leads to Metekel Zone, Pawi and Asosa. The people using that road and the people that get assaulted, the numbers are very high. On May 2013 a female traveling from Jawi didn't have her identification on her so the guards made her spend the night, some have even told me that she has been sexual assaulted. Mr. Temesgen in 2001 was a refugee who came from Welega and resides in Jawi, his wife was traveling to Finot Selam to check on relatives but she was pulled over at the Car checkpoint. He doesn't know what they did to her but she developed mental problems. I have been told that she has been cured by holy water from Debel.

On similar cases people are shot with arrow at the Dibateh checkpoint too. Also with the recent flee two people have died and in 2012 one Amhara has died too. On most of the checkpoints even if with the proper identification Amhara's were not allowed to go through.

No.	Checkpoint Name	Location		Investigation
		Zone	District	
1	<u>Kar</u>	<u>Metekel</u>	<u>Mandura</u>	<u>Pawi &amp; Jawi Road</u>
2	<u>Dibateh</u>	<u>Metekel</u>	<u>Debateh</u>	<u>Wenbera Road</u>
3	<u>Gesengesa</u>	<u>Metekel</u>	<u>Wenbera</u>	<u>Wenbera Road</u>
4	<u>Bulen</u>	<u>Metekel</u>	<u>Bulen</u>	<u>Wenbera Road</u>
5	<u>Dobina Bardo</u>	<u>Metekel</u>	<u>Bulen</u>	<u>Wenbera Road</u>

*Table: Shows the checkpoint markers*

### Personal Stories of Three Individuals

#### Bishop Mesfin Asfaw

He was born in West Gojam Zone in the town of Mecha by Dagi District. 15 years ago he moved to Benishangul Gumuz in Metekel Zone by Bulun District so that he can find a better job and serve the Church.

During his time he has become a father to 4 kids and has acquired wealth too. Since he's Amhara though in 2013 he was arrested with other Amharas for two days, ever since then he has decided to leave the town with all his life's memory.

When priest Mesfin left he didn't take anything with him at all, his 52 pounds of seed worth about \$32,000 Birr, his 50 room villa house worth \$80,000 Birr, 18 cows worth \$126,000 Birr, 3 Caddo houses worth about \$15,000 birr, full house hold goods (like bed, cabinets, tables, clothes, and more) worth about \$50,000 Birr, and other items worth a lot of money have disappeared.

Priest Mesfin now lives in Mecha District working as a day laborer to feed his family. When I was preparing this report I met him and he said who am I supposed to ask for help and started crying, I was very sad because there was nothing I could do to help.

#### Mr. Melkamu Kinde

Mr. Melkamu Kinde traveled from Amhara region to Benishangul Gumuz in Metkel zone by Bulen district in the town of Dobi 11 years ago. During that time within the regulation of the government he has gained wealth. During this year when Amaras were forced to flee he was one of them and when they were allowed to return too he has done the same. A town where he lived for 11 years he couldn't even celebrate the holiday at his home instead he had to be in exile.

Mr. Melkamu speaks: "The day was Easter Holiday and we had prepared a feast for our families and close friends to enjoy. Foods are being prepared, homemade drinks are being arranged, and people are immersed in conversations. The day passed by quickly and it was around 8:00PM at night we haven't even eaten dinner yet when suddenly my house was



surrounded with local police like we were thieves. I got caught while running like I was a criminal and was beaten, my wife was caught too and they didn't show any mercy for her, and we both remember this incident.”

They didn't just beat Mr. Melkamu and his wife but they made sure to enjoy the holiday food he and his wife prepared. The police also took two of his bulls and turned 1 of them into a feast while the no one knows what happened to other one, they also took around 30 of their chickens and no one knows what happened to them either. They also managed to trash and destroy his place with axe and tear his cloth and belongings, this individual did no crime except for being Amhara. At the time he reported this incident and had documentation with him which he gave me to photocopy but I was arrested by the district police and was thrown in jail.

Mr. Melkamu told me that on March 22nd his son was beaten so hard that he had kidney problem and his son was spitting blood till recently, all of them have been hospitalized and are doing well now.

### **Bishop Asmare Ayalew**

Bishop Asmare is 58 years old and he moved to Dobi district in 1996. In 2003 he was asked to leave the town but he refused which lead to his beating and arrest. At the same time his pregnant wife was beaten by the police and she gave birth to a physically handicapped baby boy with impaired eyesight. He is 11 years old unable to walk and suffering from mental problems.

.On March 28th 2013 unidentified persons broke down their door and physically assaulted the bishop while his wife who was returning from the local market was almost killed by an arrow until someone stepped in and stopped the assailant. On May 4th 2013 their house was burned by vigilantes who broke a wooden safe and stole \$60,000 Birr and destroyed 700 lbs of crops. I was told that Bishop Asmare and his family were the victims of very hateful acts and suffered greatly at the hands of the local people they thought were their neighbors.

### **My Information Sources: Names and Addresses**

**Sorry, I have removed this part of the information**

**Names and rank of people who were in charge of making sure they fled**

No.	Names	Place	Rank	Ethnicity region	Phone No.
1	<u>Shanbel Belew</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Agew</u>	0922185599
2	<u>Kasahune Birle</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Agew</u>	
3	<u>Birhanu Bekere</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	0921572927
4	<u>Nega Kebede</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
5	<u>Simhene Ambisa</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
6	<u>Jirata Bekeltu</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
7	<u>Asnake Desalgne</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	0918618454
8	<u>Tarkegne Sisi</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Soldier	<u>Shinasha</u>	0917180914
9	<u>Fikadu Ayana</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	0921572334
10	<u>Lemisa Rana</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
11	<u>Asfa Mario</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	0921572065
12	<u>Tolosa Jirata</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
13	<u>Sileshi</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Teacher	<u>Shinasha</u>	
14	<u>Muluken Asefa</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Farmer	<u>Shinasha</u>	0912443497
15	<u>Aferesi Ferede</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Soldier	<u>Shinasha</u>	0912353799
16	<u>Etefa Wekjira</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
17	<u>Atenafe Zelek</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Agew</u>	
18	<u>Wegari Alega</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	0922551827
19	<u>Wendasa Desasa</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
20	<u>Mebratu birr</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	
21	<u>Girmasa Wakijira</u>	<u>Bardo</u>	Government official	<u>Shinasha</u>	

#### People that came from Bulen Region for reinforcements

1	<u>Amsalu Sebeta</u>	<u>Bulen District</u>		<u>Shinasha</u>	
2	<u>Ejeta Werku</u>	<u>Bulen District</u>		<u>Shinasha</u>	
3	<u>Askale Alsero</u>	<u>Bulen District</u>		<u>Shinasha</u>	
4	<u>Asmare Aminte</u>	<u>Bulen District</u>		<u>Shinasha</u>	

#### Others contact information

No.	Name	Place	In charge of	Ethnicity region	Phone No.
1	<u>Birhanu Getnet</u>	<u>Bulen District</u>	Police	<u>Shinasha</u>	
2	<u>Kashune Ejigu</u>	<u>Metkel Zone</u>	Investigator	<u>Shinasha</u>	
3		<u>Metkel Zone Justice</u>	Person in charge	<u>Shinasha</u>	0581190027
4	<u>Asrat Fantahun</u>	<u>Bensahgul Gumuz</u> <u>Police Commissioner</u>	investigator	<u>Shinasha</u>	0577750093
5	<u>Mr. Mahmoud</u> <u>Nasir</u>	Zone office	President	Berta	0577750109

A lot of people have faced harsh treatments just because they are of Amhara ethnicity and there were many stories I was told of the atrocities they suffered. For example I heard of a pregnant woman that was beaten by armed security forces giving birth to a

handicapped child people who lost their homes because it was burned to the ground and farmers who lost their land with all their crops.

The government should take immediate action to stop the discriminatory policies on Amhara citizens before the situation gets out of hand. The recent history of Apartheid South Africa and the Rwanda genocide where extremist Hutus massacred Tutsis and moderate Hutus should remind us of the dangerous consequences of enticing ethnic hatred.

Since 1991, when the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Front (EPRDF) came to power Ethiopians have been deliberately divided into two groups- the oppressor and the oppressed. In published books Amharas are labeled as the oppressors and all other ethnic groups in Ethiopia as the oppressed. Amharas are demonized for all historical grievances. The officially sanctioned narrative for the last two decades has brought untold tragedy on Amharas to the point that being an Amhara is considered a liability due to the hardships it creates for this group.

All over the country the majority of the farmers that are displaced are ethnic Amharas and since 1991 these internally displaced people in different parts of the country have lost large amounts of property unfairly. The government has been complicit in all these intolerable actions.

In 2000/2001 from Welega province more than 14,000 Amaras have become internally displaced. Recently in Gura Fereda and Benishangul Gumuz near Kemash and Metkel regions close to 10 thousand people have lost their homes. Even though many were allowed to return they do not feel safe living there at present. It is disconcerting to hear about people being targeted due to their ethnicity. It should be an intolerable and unacceptable situation in this day and age. To me I don't see the goal of going after a specific ethnicity; the people who live in Bulen district will have their day when survival is a possibility.

Recently in Benishangul Gumuz in Metkel zone near Bulen, Dobi, and Bardo district this is what I saw. In Dobi and Bardo the type of crime that's taking place on the farmers the government shouldn't have kept quiet. After the refugees return to their homes, their homes will be burned to the ground, their farm animals will be stolen, the females will be beaten up when they go to the stream to get water and when they report these cases to the proper officials the response they receive is that we don't look into Amhara cases. People losing their farm lands and being denied of renting, all these are still taking place in those districts. If I wrote this and that person with their names I feared that those people will suffer so I have left out some of the names to keep them safe. For these people the government isn't there to protect them from robbery and attacks.

Even though these Amharas lived more than 10 years in that region, those that have become land owners are very few. Most of them rent their land from others so they can farm on it and the others just provide their labor for others. Since they are not born in the region and are Amhara ethnicity they are exempt from getting anything.

All their hard work can be lost in a matter of a day so there is no such thing as investing back into the region from Amharas since they can lose everything in a blink of an eye. All their houses, business, and belongings can be lost overnight so the only option is to save their cash so that when they get kicked out, at least they will have cash to survive.

**This difficult period will become a new covenant for these people:**

1. When the government can provide protection for these people and guarantee that they will not be victims to repeated property loss and damage and that they can live peacefully in a secure environment. in a secure in peace multiple times, also becoming a refugee or other forms of attacks can be prevent and that the government can guarantee them this
2. When an independent inquiry commission is created to assist victims and to investigate what happened and find ways to alleviate these types of future attacks.
3. When Amahara citizens are able to own land in any part of the country and not be excluded from acquiring land. They should not lose their fundamental rights because they live outside of their ethnic homeland.

If all these remedies are not instituted don't happen there is a danger in the horizon for the ruling party. No one chooses their ethnicity at birth. Therefore, the current hostility towards Amhara and the unwarranted victimization needs to stop with this generation before it gets out of control. Amharas should have the right to live and work in any part of the country without being subjected to any form of discrimination.