

## Press Release

Afar Forum strongly condemns the politically motivated assassination of the famous Oromo singer Hachalu Hundesa on June 29, 2020. Our deepest sadness and heartfelt condolences go to his families and followers. The senseless and untimely death of Hachalu triggered the loss of many lives and destruction of properties. The Afar Forum is equally saddened and we express our heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost loved ones.

The Afar Forum calls on the Government of Ethiopia to establish an independent commission to investigate the killing of Hachalu and bring the perpetrators of such heinous act to face justice. We also call upon the government to release all political prisoners who were imprisoned following the killing of Hachalu.

This tragic event exposed how we Ethiopians deal with each other. All nations and nationalities of Ethiopia should live in harmony, peace and with a sense of equal treatment both structurally and socially. Ethiopia belongs to all of us and we all are the protectors of this country. All nations and nationalities of Ethiopia want to see a country where all its citizens are treated as equal, practice their religion without discrimination and freely express their opinions without fear and retribution. Equally, a century old grievances that successive Ethiopian governments have failed to resolve must be addressed through all-inclusive dialogue. The magnitude of violence and social unrest witnessed today is due to the fact that the incumbent government has opted to ignore addressing the need for national dialog and reconciliation. The issue of federalism, ethnicity and decentralization of power and resources are here to stay and will continue to trigger such tragic events and more instability to the country and the region. History teaches us that the use of force by all successive Ethiopian governments did not solve the legitimate grievances. Hence, lets learn from the past!

The Afar Forum believes that the current federal arrangement must be protected and the federal government must empower the regional states to exercise the constitutionally guaranteed self-rule and to freely elect their leaders in a democratic and free election. Furthermore, the Afar Forum believes nations and nationalities of Ethiopia should freely move to any part of Ethiopia to live and work without fear. The regional states must guarantee the safety and security of the people who live in the region regardless of their ethnic background.

The Afar Forum condemns the religious extremists of all forms who are behind the recent incitement of conflict between Muslims and Christians.



Afar Forum Executive Committee

July 25, 2020