

ADDA BILISUMMAA OROMOO



OROMO LIBERATION FRONT

جبهة تحرير اورومو

Date: 16 August 2007

No. 03/ABO/07

To clarify the unsuccessful legal proceeding against the OLF

We can now reveal that the splinter Asmara Group (also known as Shanee) had filed a lawsuit against active members and officials of the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in the District Court of Minneapolis, State of Minnesota, USA, on 19th July 2007.

The plaintiffs alleged that the defendants, Oromo nationalists, were members of the OLF in the past but are now "passing themselves off as the OLF." In so doing, The Asmara Group alleged in their lawsuit, the OLF interfered with their "prospective economic advantage" by threatening to cause them "to suffer damages in the form of lost goodwill, loss of members, loss of potential members and loss of donations."

Furthermore, the Asmara Group demanded a recompense claim for a total sum of "\$50,000". Thus, the case was not about political objective but group's economic interest. It is unfortunate that the plaintiffs are claiming that "OLF has expended substantial resources developing its goodwill, reputation, and donor base". We in the OLF, on the other hand, believe that what ever goodwill or reputation the OLF have is due to the ultimate sacrifices made by thousands of Oromo heroes and heroines not economic investment made by the Asmara Group.

We can also reveal that after two days of court appearances, the judge has thrown out the case by dismissing the case "without prejudice" before the originally planned hearing date of 16th August 2007.

We are forced to issue this press release because of the continuous misinformation that has been disseminated by the Asmara Group. This group has been busy spreading unfounded rumours about the aforementioned court case, including claiming that it was us (the OLF) that started the legal process in the first place, which is absolutely false. We would like to assure friends and foes alike that we, the OLF, have absolutely nothing to do with the instigation of the legal process but once accused were forced to mount a defence as the law of the land requires.

It is to be remembered that the Asmara Group led by Mr Dawud Ibsa, under whose leadership the group departed from the original objective of the OLF, is now bidding for Ethiopian state power in a coalition with forces that are trying to deny the right of the Oromo people to self-determination, in particular the Amhara political party known as Coalition for Freedom and Democracy (CFD) (also known as Kinjit). These two groups have created a pro-Ethiopian political party called Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (AFD). Now buoyant with the support and advice it receives from the CFD, the Asmara Group has taken the OLF to the court.

As far as the OLF is concerned, it is NOT for foreign courts to determine who is OLF and who is not. This is a case that can be decided ONLY by the Oromo people. If it were up to the OLF, no funds raised in the name of the Oromo struggle would be squandered on frivolous court cases like this one.

We would like to wholeheartedly thank true Oromo nationalists and compatriots who continue to support our patriotic liberation front – the OLF, true to Oromummaa and the just cause of quest for liberation of Oromia. The level of warmth and practical support that we have received from true sons and daughters of the Oromo nation has humbled us.

We salute the courage of our members who have shown dignity and remain steadfast and resolute under a very trying condition. We are not under any illusion that freedom is cheap.

Finally, we would like to call upon true Oromo nationalists who are still working with the Asmara Group to reconsider their stand by examining their consciences. We call upon you to do the dignified thing and say enough is enough to those who are hell-bent on destroying not only the OLF but also the very fabric of our society.

Oromia shall be free!

The OLF Executive Committee