

Ethiopia: Land clashes claim 20 People in southern region

Text of report by Ethiopian opposition radio Voice of Oromo Liberation audio website on 7 June

Twenty people have been killed in clashes instigated by the Ethiopian government and its agents between two Oromo clans in southern Oromia. Ethiopian cadres and local administration on Sunday, 4 June 2006, set Borana and Guji clans against each other.

Twenty Oromos were killed and many more were wounded in the clashes. A lot of property was also destroyed in the fighting.

The government and its agents had been going between the two clans and telling each side to claim ownership of the same land, sparking clashes between the communities. The clashes, which occurred in Yabello and Shakiso districts, were halted after elders from the two clans intervened. Oromo nationals in the districts said it was shameful for the clashes to occur at a time of heightened nationalism among the Oromo people. They stated that it was reprehensible for the Oromos to kill each other at a time when the Oromo were forging ties with other ethnic groups in the fight against their common enemy, the Ethiopian government.

They said it was important for the Oromo to realize the government's scheme aimed at weakening their freedom struggle. They added that the Ethiopian government and its agents would be held responsible for the blood of Oromos shed in the clashes.

Elders from Borana and Guji clans have called on the two communities to end the government-instigated land dispute peacefully.

Source: Voice of Oromo Liberation audio website in Oromo 7 Jun 06

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