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## PRESS RELEASE

### Merawi massacre in Gojam, Ethiopia

Just a tip of the iceberg of Abiy's capital crimes against the Amhara civilian population

**War crimes against the unarmed civilian population in Amhara continue. The Merawi massacre in Gojam on 29 January 2024 with at least 150 victims is just the tip of the iceberg of Abiy's capital crimes. Since April 2023, Abiy's army has been unconstitutionally attacking the Amhara region. The army has been using drones and heavy weapons against the civilian population. The soldiers kill defenceless Amhara people in the streets, go from house to house raping young girls and women, emasculating young Amhara men and robbing them.**

On 29 January 2024, a fierce firefight broke out in and around the city of Merawi, about 35 km from Bahrdar, between the Abiy army and the Amhara self-defence forces, Fano. The firefight ended when the Fanos withdrew from the town of Merawi.

After the Fanos retreated, Abiy Army reinforcements arrived in Merawi town and began indiscriminately killing unarmed civilians. Eyewitnesses reported that the Abiy army went from house to house, driving civilians out of their homes and shooting them en masse in the streets. A mother with her two-year-old child and a 13-year-old boy were shot dead. A father was shot dead in front of his house. Eyewitnesses also found bodies shot in the head in the street.

Eyewitnesses told the BBC that the bodies of 34 people were buried in a mass grave in St Mary's cemetery. Four bodies were buried in the Medhanialm Church cemetery. The bodies of 20 Muslim victims were buried in the Muslim cemetery. The massacres mainly took place in districts 1 and 2 of the city of Merawi. Some media speak of up to 190 dead. In addition to the civilian victims, Abiy's troops deliberately destroyed private property belonging to residents of the city. Among other things, more than 11 Bajaj vehicles were burnt and an unknown number of houses were damaged by artillery fire.

Since the beginning of the invasion of the Amhara region in April 2023, the Abiy army has committed the following massacres

- The massacre of more than 500 people at Debre Elyas Monastery in West Gojam in June 2023
- On 11 October 2023, numerous civilians were killed and injured in an attack with heavy weapons in Dembecha, Gojam Zone
- On 13/10/2023, numerous civilians, including a two-year-old child, were killed by drone attacks in North Shewa, Berehet District
- On 16/10/2023, 8 civilians were killed by drone strikes in the town of Debre Markos.
- During house searches, the Abiy army in Gojam killed numerous civilians in the towns of Bahrdar, Adet, Amanuel town (8 civilians), Gindewoin town on 07/10/2023 alone, including 12 prospective priest students in Filseta Debremariam.
- Thousands of civilians were killed in more than 120 Abiy Army combat drone missions.
- The number of raped women who were registered and treated in health centres between July 2023 and October 2023 is 200. It is easy to understand that the number of victims is far higher than 200 with a number of unreported cases.

In view of the war crimes committed by the Abiy regime, we call for:

- The immediate withdrawal of Abiy's army from the Amhara region.
- Launch an independent investigation to hold those responsible for the war crimes accountable, especially Abiy Ahmed, Field Marshal Birhanu Jula, General Abebaw Tadesse and General Ahmed Tessema, commander of the army in East Gojam.