

---

## PRESS RELEASE

## 18 January 2024

---

### **Attacks on Oromo refugees in Somalia and Somaliland Teenage girl killed**

On 10 January, hundreds of residents of Dhusmareb, the capital city of Galmudug province in central Somalia, attacked Oromo refugees, destroying homes and businesses and killing an Oromo teenager. Initial reports of more killings by the *Oromia Media Network*<sup>1</sup> have been found to be inaccurate when checked by local informants for OSG.

Similar attacks were reported in Puntland and in the breakaway province of Somaliland to the north. The hostility was levelled against all refugees from Ethiopia in response to the *de facto* recognition of Somaliland as an independent state by Ethiopia, when PM Abiy Ahmed and Somaliland's President, Muse Bihi Abdi, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of an Ethiopian naval base and port at Lughaya on the Somaliland coast midway between Berbera and the border with Djibouti, on 1 January.

The MoU was initially welcomed in Somaliland but increased hostility to Oromo refugees became apparent within a few days, once vehement opposition to the MoU in Somalia, the Arab League and African Union was voiced. On 6 January, attacks on Oromo refugees in Borco (161 km East of Hargeisa) were quelled by police. Next day, at least 17 were injured in Borama (105 km West of the capital) and several more were injured and businesses and homes were destroyed in Hargeisa within a few more days.

There were attacks in Bosasso, Puntland, but the worst incidents were in central Somalia, where a teenage girl was killed in Dhusmareb on 10 January, Furdosa Jamal Aliyi (right).



Problems for refugees in Somaliland are longstanding. In 2012, OSG reported attacks, refoulement of refugees and deportations of registered asylum-seekers.<sup>2</sup> There is continuing failure of Somaliland to register Oromo asylum-seekers and of UNHCR to grant refugee status to Oromo since 2021.<sup>3</sup> Mandated refugees are being physically abused, subjected to police extortion and threatened with deportation. Over 100 families were forced from their homes and businesses in Hargeisa in June 2023. Thousands have been deported since 2021, including registered asylum-seekers and documented refugees.

*Media contact:* Dr Trevor Trueman, [osg@talktalk.net](mailto:osg@talktalk.net), +44 (0)7852 448337

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZM6x1Qdav/>

<sup>2</sup> OSG Report 47, <https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-47-Somaliland-Feb-2012-Persecuted-in-Ethiopia-Hunted-in-Hargeisa.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> OSG Report 58, <https://oromiasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/Report-58.pdf>