



# **Gambella Nilotes United Movement/Army**

**Press Release**  
**26<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

## **“Ethiopian Government Must Stop Instigating Ethnic Cleansing Conflicts and Killings of Indigenous People through Resettling Refugees and Establishment of Many Military Camps for Rebels throughout the Gambella Region”**

GNUM Condemns the **New TPLF government’s Systematic Military Operation** against the Indigenous Nilotic-Omotic Peoples of South Western Regions of Ethiopia. The New military operation plan known as “**Black Revolution**” is deadly secretive and very systematic in its practice, and aims at systematic elimination of total existence of the indigenous black nations (Nilotic peoples) living in Gambella, Lower Omo and Beneshangul Gumuz regions, and any resistance against the ongoing land grabs and forced evictions in the South western regions. It provides protection and assurance to highlanders’ (Northerners) systematic occupation and economic empowerment in the South Western regions.

Despite the increasing international and local criticisms over the ongoing land grabs and forced eviction of indigenous people, the TPLF government proves persistent and rigid to its racist policies and practices against the unarmed and vulnerable indigenous peoples of the South-western regions in particular to Gambella.

Black Revolution is a derogatory and discriminatory program designed to address and strengthen the existence segregation and racial discrimination of Ethiopian highlanders (Abyssinians) against the Nilotic tribes in Ethiopia, and adopts strategies and practices based on local mechanism and opportunities in favor of highlanders in the Southwestern regions. These include:

### **A. Instigating ethnic cleansing conflicts and killings in the region**

Under this strategy, in the Gambella region, the stakes are already in the place. The TPLF government is addressing and promoting the **Nuers’ traditional territorial expansion sentiment** as basic tool to enhance animosity in the region among the indigenous tribes, allowing the armed Nuer groups (both Ethiopians Nuers and South Sudanese Nuer refugees) evict their fellow Anuak, Majenger, Opo, and Komo tribes from their ancestral land.

Many ethnic wars and killings are already taking place without fair responses from the TPLF government, and are yet to escalate while the government endorses the killings to uproot and eliminate the existence of the indigenous Nilotic populations from their lands.

The substantive evidence comprise: the mass killings of Opo tribes in Wanki village by the armed Nuers in December 2014; the killing of Captain Pinykew Ojulu in November 29/2014 (anthropologist who was killed on duty in promoting cultural show in Itang town) by the Nuers' refugees without government protection; the abduction of 4 Anuak children in Kutbudi Pinyudo village, the killing of Chief Oguul of Nyiuum village and the killing of 1 farmer in Shentowa village by armed Nuers in February/2015, the killing of 2 Anuaks men in Pochalla (Pochala-Olura), and the abduction of 2 children in Pinyudo village on February 26/2015; the killings of 1 Anuak farmer in Nyikwo village on February 11/2015; the killing of 2 and wounded of 3 Anuaks from Tedo village on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and the disappearing of many Anuak women, men, and children around the Pinyudo refugees camp. More of such incidents are to take place soon as long the TPLF government continues to endorse the ethnic cleansing killings in Gambella as way to lease the indigenous lands to highlanders and foreign investors in the region.

### **B. South Sudanese refugees as pretext to accelerate urbanizations, and systematic occupation and economic empowerment of highlanders (Northern) in Gambella**

The South Sudanese refugees and rebels have been given absolute freedom and power in Gambella to demand areas they want to settle for new refugee camps such as Cholan, Pokong, Jawi, Ochom, Kobon, Karmi, in addition to what have already existed camps in Bonga, Dimma, Pinyudo and Itang, in the lands of Anuak, Majenger, Opo, and Komo tribes. It is an intentional government push to accelerate urbanization, systematic occupation and economic empowerment of highlanders in Gambella, through ARRA (Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs - the strongest TPLF security organ in Gambella).

The areas demanded are very fertile and strategic to accelerate and attract huge number of highlanders to consolidate their occupation in Gambella. The endorsement of the TPLF government to these new refugees' camps may response temporarily to the Nuer refugees' interest as pretext to serve the long term systematic occupation and economic empowerment of highlanders in the region.

### **C. Arbitrary arrests and detentions of elites**

Already more than 80 Anuaks, 45 Majengers and many other unknown numbers of Anuak and Majenger elites have been arrested and many more are to be arrested soon in Addis Ababa where they cannot be visited by their families. This is unconstitutional act of the TPLF government effort to mute any vocal voice among the indigenous Nilotic communities in Gambella, to ensure the consolidation and systematic occupation and economic empowerment of highlanders (Northerners) in the region.

### **D. The South Sudanese rebels mainly Nuers are synonymous with the refugees and the Ethiopian's Nuers of the same ethnic community**

No demarcation has been made between refugees and locals, and between the rebels and the civilian Nuers, to separate which from which, as the TPLF government is engaging the Gambella region into chaos to accelerate the extinction of the indigenous tribes from their land. The presence of the TPLF defense forces and the federal police has already sent clear

racial discrimination between the highlanders and the Nilotes in which the government is primarily engaged in protecting the security and businesses of highlanders alone.

**E. The Saudi Star agricultural farm turn out into the TPLF military Barracks, and the training centre for the Nuer armed groups to accelerate the killings of the surrounding indigenous populations in preparation to extract the secretive petroleum and sacred resources in Gambella**

**F. Gaari of Gog district: another training centre for the armed Nuers group to increase ambush killings against the surrounding indigenous Anuaks in preparation to lease their land for foreign and domestic investors**

The lease of the most dense forest and fertile land of Gog and Gaari villages to domestic and foreign investors for agriculture, is without free, prior, and informed consent of the villagers. The ongoing deforestation witnesses the disappearing of the indigenous people from the area, and nobody could tell how the villagers in Gaari disappeared and left behind their farms, fruit trees, and domestic animals which confirm the systematic killings of the surrounding villagers for their land.

Moreover, it must be understood that the Ethiopian government is the key player in widening the current South Sudanese conflict to continue escalating and destabilizing the East Africa countries as it does to Somalia in 2006. With our reliable sources most the refugees crossing the border from South Sudan to Gambella, are trained soldiers and the TPLF government endorses the spread of many refugees' camps to be used as military training headquarters and the recruiting centers for military training.

The Ethiopian government is currently arming the South Sudanese rebels to destabilize the peace and security in South Sudan and other Eastern Africa countries. With this obscure attitude and intention of the Ethiopian government in the current South Sudanese conflict, Gambella is becoming a battleground to weaken the existing local social coping mechanism and militarize the area to increase atrocities among the indigenous populations.

But could the Nuers be naïve enough to realize the puzzle the TPLF government is playing in the region against their own Nilotes? The rule of the game is simple and clear. The TPLF government priority number one is to acquire the indigenous land and the resources of the region without the presence of the Nilotes. It can be easily recognized from the current fast growth of highlanders' occupation and settlement patterns descending from the neighboring Bure and Amfilo towns on highland down to Gambella lowland. It is self-evidence from the fast growing number of highlanders that one can witness the threat coming to the indigenous existence in the region. If the new refugees' camps in Kobon, Jawi, Karmi, Pikong, Ochom, and Cholan, are put in place in addition to what have already existed, will increasingly consolidate their systematic occupation and domination in Gambella. And it has already sent negative signals and impact to the indigenous populations.

The Nuers should be aware of any repercussion of their choice in this particular critical time to provide favorable future and relationship with other fellow Nilotes, and carefully assess

how the TPLF government is misusing them to turn their guns against their fellow Nilotes. They should look critically how their ambition to acquire land from their fellow Nilotes through bloodshed will have terrible consequences for the generations to come. They need to work on common ground for the future of Nilotes in the region to share with Nilotes is an issue at all as it only requires unifying leadership to fight back the elements of threats. Nuers must learn from the history of Agaw, Gumu of Gonder, Oromo, Southern Nations, Mao, Komo, Anuak, Majenger, and many others, that they will be the next prey to Abyssinians systematic occupation and internal colonization if they think carefully.

If the TPLF government continues to entertain and promote the traditional Nuers' interest on territorial expansion in Gambella, it will endanger the long term survival of all the indigenous Nilotic people including Nuers in the region. And Nuers as they are loosely connected historically to the land they will definitely be the last loser and victims to Abyssinian systematic occupation and colonization.

With these facts therefore, we are calling upon the United Nations Security Council, US government, EU, AU, International Humanitarian Organizations and all concerned bodies to monitor the extinction and insecurity of the indigenous Nilotes specially the Anuaks, Opo, Majengers, and Komos tribes in the Gambella region. In particular cases, the establishment of many refugee camps by the TPLF/EPRDF in Gambella should be known as pretext to promote the land grabs and forced eviction of the indigenous Nilotes in the region; that UNHCR should stop cooperation with TPLF government for the establishment of many refugee camps in Gambella region; **to consider our greater autonomy and territorial integrity to stop the TPLF government extinction measures;** to ensure our independent development and foreign policies to secure our freedom and prosperity in our land. All those refugees in Gambella should be distributed among Ethiopians particularly Tigray and Amhara regions.

ARRA being the source and cause of all the ethnic cleansing conflicts and killings in the region, GNUM calls upon the UN to observe and cease its funds going into the ARRA; UN should consider also its full responsibility to take into account the safety of the indigenous population in Gambella. ARRA and the TPLF top leadership should be made accountable for the lost of every Nilotic member and forced eviction of the indigenous populations and in the region.

The South Sudanese rebels and the Ethiopian Nuers' leaderships should be made accountable for the ongoing disappearing and lost the indigenous Anuaks, Opo, Majengers, and Komo in the Gambella region.

We are also calling upon the TPLF/EPRDF government to stop instigating the South Sudanese refugee and use them as instruments for killing of the indigenous Nilotes to restore our communal land rights and ownership in accord with the UN provisions.

Finally, we call upon the TPLF/EPRDF government to stop killing of the indigenous Nilotes; to release our brothers kept in various prisons in the country under inhumanly conditions; to

respect our territorial integrity to stop government extinction measures; to ensure our independent development and foreign policies to secure our freedom and prosperity in our territories.

In conclusion the Gambella Nilotes United Movement/Army (GNUM/A) will continue its struggle for all people of Gambella and all the South western Nilotes to ensure freedom, justice, security and prosperity are brought to our people in their lands.

**“Freedom and Justice for All the Oppressed Nilotes of Gambella”**

**“Rights and Justice for the Indigenous Nilotic- Omotic Peoples of South-Western Ethiopia”**

**GAMBELLA NILOTES UNITED MOVEMENT/ARMY  
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