



Gambella Nilotes United Movement/Army

**GNUM/A Press Release
August 10th, 2012 (Gambella)**

“Unity for Freedom” First Year Anniversary of GNUM/A

August 10th 2012 is the first anniversary of GNUM/A. This day has a very special place in the history of the Gambella People for the commitment and common understanding made by the three parties' leaders who jointly agreed to unite to fight for the freedom of the indigenous Nilotes, as the only way forward to bring freedom for the people of Gambella from the oppressive regime of TPLF/EPRDF corrupt leadership. The three parties include the Gambella People Liberation Movement/Force (GPLM/F), the Gambella People United Democratic Front (GPUDF) and the Southwest Ethiopia Nilo-Saharan Peoples Independent Movement (SENPIM). This day is remembered by all unity-loving-people of Gambella, and the people who participated directly in all process of the unity including their exercise of the democratic rights to vote for their leaders for self-determination. As fully supported by many Gambella communities and their representatives from different part of the world, the unity was very successful and fruitful for the indigenous people of Gambella and has further embraced the other Nilotic-Omotic people of Southwest Ethiopia, under the vision of SENPIM.

The successive Ethiopian regimes since Menilik II have continued to deny the rights and the freedom of the Gambella indigenous people and the climax of cruelty and brutality in the country has been felt in extreme marginalization, genocidal mass killings, imprisonment, tortures, poisonings, and evictions of our people from their ancestral land. The Ethiopian divide and rule colonial system and policies persist and the violation of human rights against the Gambella people continued. It is through this realization that the Gambella peoples chose to pursue arm and diplomatic struggle to resist the Ethiopian colonial policies and human rights violations for self-determination.

The recent land lease deal signed between the Ethiopian government and the commercial companies and forced displacement without free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous communities have raised great concern among the indigenous people of Gambella and the southwest as whole, i.e. clearing of large forest for agriculture without respect to ecosystem, the subsequent indirect settlement of large highlanders particularly from the north as laborers to outnumber and extinct the indigenous populations, compounded with the racist actions of the

government and lack of interest to bring sound development to improve the lives of the natives, has proven the darkest future to our lives in the country. The discrimination and marginalization against our race, color and cultures as indigenous populations (Nilotes) are deepening and worsening. Despite our very rich resources in the whole southwest regions our people (Nilotes) continue to be poor. The depletion of resources including the clearing of huge forest following the arrival of the settlers from highlands of Ethiopia and the great number of refugees from across Sudan in the past decades, and the current land grab and the increasing cutting of the dense forests have resulted in deforestation, migration of wildlife to the neighboring countries, lost of communal land rights and the reduction in the level of water in the major rivers throughout the region, with profound adverse effect to our livelihood and cultural heritage.

It is through this realization that GNUM/A was formed with the fundamental objective to bring freedom to the indigenous people of Gambella and the neighboring Southwest Nilotic Ethiopians from all forms of political, economical and social discrimination and oppression. In the pursuit of GPLM (1975-1991) political vision under the new mission, it is agreed to carry out this objective along the political platform of Gambella Nilotes United Movement/Army (GNUM/A).

In celebrating this day, we shall solemnly remember our heroes' brothers and sisters who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of Gambella people and we wish to assure to carry out this vision alive. This is the day also we shall pray for our people who are under detention, who are still sufferings under the TPLF/EPRDF brutality and cruelty. Since 1991 the TPLF/EPRDF took many indigenous people into prison and some are still under detention in different military barracks, some died in the prison, and some their fates are not yet known. We condemn the whole inhuman treatment and the attacks against the civilians in the Gambella region or elsewhere in the country by the TPLF/EPRDF government, and we want to inform that our firm struggle in Gambella and outside the country that our war for freedom will target only the government security institutions and equipments, not civilians.

Today we join our hands together to celebrate the first anniversary of GNUM/A. To all of you who are celebrating with us, we want you to know that your support for unity is a gift to the people of Gambella. Thank you for the solidarity and support to the movement. It should be known that your struggle for liberation began long ago by our Heroes since the incorporation of Gambella under Ethiopian regimes. It was then organized into political organ called the GPLM of 1975 and we hope that the leadership of GNUM/A will realize the importance of our unity for continuous struggle for self-determination to live as free and dignified people in the land. For this, we want you to join hands together and fight for freedom in order to be free people from all forms of Ethiopian systematic discriminations and exploitative relationship.

We have been able to lay down the foundation and political strategy for way to victory by embracing our brothers and sisters of Southwest Nilotic-Omoti peoples under the vision of SENPIM. The people of the of Benishangul Gumuz and lower Omo Valley of Nilotic-Omoti people have already joined us to fight alongside the opposition parties to overthrow the TPLF/EPRDF dictator leadership from their ancestral land.

We must work very hard to win the support of the indigenous people in which we are calling upon all the indigenous populations of Gambella, Benishangul/Gumuz and lower Omo Valley

Nilotic-Omotic peoples to support the GNUM/A under the umbrella of SENPIM. We must also work hard to get the international community on board to support our struggle for self-determination. The commitment showed in creating unity for the people of Gambella living in east African countries should be built upon to unify our resources for common objective. We are calling upon all people of Gambella people around the world to remind you again that, the best way to freedom and victory to overthrow the repressive TPLF/EPRDF government is only through bringing the resources together than operating in different line of operation both politically and militarily. GNUM/A would like to urge all people of Gambella to stand together and fight the TPLF regime as one force. Our journey of liberation will be concluded with your clear and majority support for the freedom of the oppressed of the Southwest Nilotic-Omotic people including Gambella.

Finally, we are calling the TPLF/EPRDF to stop harassing the indigenous people, detention, tortures, and killing of the civilians inside the country. The TPLF/EPRDF should equally stop treating the indigenous people like animals and immediately should stop the land grab, and the forced displacement of the indigenous populations without conditions. We oppose any indirect settlement of the highlanders especially from the north to assimilate and extinct our people in the land. Our indigenous members and the communities who are suffering under the TPLF/EPRDF soldiers and prisons should be released without conditions. Failure or ignorance to accept these statement of GNUM/A, the TPLF/EPRDF government will bear the full responsibility and the struggle for the people of Gambella will continue until the full realization of our self-determination in our ancestral land. Our land is our identity, history, communal property, and the meaning of our self-worth as dignified humans and it should be just tempered with mere political ambition. It is politically very emotional for which we can sacrifice our lives at any cost.

UNITY FOR FREEDOM

ONE PEOPLE, ONE GOAL

GNUM/A CENTRAL COMMITTEE