

POLITICAL PROGRAMME OF THE OGADEN NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (ONLF)

PART 1. Declaration Forming The ONLF

We the people of Ogaden

Recognizing that our country has been colonized against our will and without our consent by Ethiopia

Noting the misrepresentation of our struggle as a border conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia

Having witnessed the indiscriminate murder of our families and the looting of our collective and individual wealth

Having been denied our universally recognized human and political rights

Alarmed by the affront against our culture and way of life

Recognizing that the colonization of our country is the primary impediment to our economic and social progress

Noting that through successive regimes the oppressive policies of our colonizer towards our people and country remains constant

Have on this day August 15th 1984 in our country of Ogaden Established the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF)

And as such we have bestowed upon it the following mandates.

To reclaim our inherent right to national self-determination

To defend our country ,its people and natural resources from all enemies external & internal.

To restore our universally recognized human and civil rights.

To serve as the legitimate representative of our people and struggle to all

In order to fulfill its mandate, and as the people demand, we hereby adopt Unity! Sacrifice!

Self-Reliance! Victory! as the ONLFs motto and guiding principles

PART 2. Political Programme Of The ONLF

Noting the need to clearly articulate our ideology, policy positions and philosophy to the International Community, we the founders of the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) state our views on the following areas as follows.

THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

1 ON EFFORTS TO REACH A PEACEFULL SOLUTION

- A. Noting that our occupation has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of our citizens
- B. Affirming that we shall leave no stone unturned in the search for a peaceful and just solution to the Ogaden struggle
- C. Recognizing that our colonizer (Ethiopia) has a history of broken promises

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) affirms that we stand ready to dialogue with our colonizer with no pre conditions subject to the presence of an independent international observer (state or organization) to witness any discussions or agreements

2. ON THE RIGHT TO SELF-DEFENCE

- A Recognizing that Ogaden has been illegally colonized by Ethiopia without the will and without the consent of our people
- B Noting that successive regimes in Ethiopia have continued oppressive practices in Ogaden
- C Choosing to exercise our inherent right to self-defence
- D. Responding to our national duty to our country and our people
- E. Affirming our opposition to engaging civilians and non-combatants.

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) shall act in defense of our people, country and natural resources and engage colonial military forces until their inevitable removal from our homeland and the restoration of our inalienable rights.

3. ON FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

- A. Noting that the Ogaden people’s liberation struggle has experienced numerous external influences and interference
- B. Recognizing the need for a vanguard organization to spearhead our people’s struggle

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) affirms that it shall remain an independent entity accountable only to the people of Ogaden and self-reliant in the securing of our needs in accordance with our people's wishes

4. ON THE MISREPRESENTATION OF THE OGADEN STRUGGLE

A. Having witnessed the misrepresentation of our struggle as a conflict between two States

B. Recognizing that this misrepresentation serves only to divert attention from the plight of our people to serve external interests.

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) declares that Ogaden issue is not a border dispute between two neighbors, Ethiopia and Somalia, as held by the former, but rather a conflict between a colonized people and their colonizer. Hence, the ONLF categorically denounces any efforts to characterize our struggle as an Inter-State conflict.

RELIGION & PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

1. ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION

A. Noting that every individual, regardless of religious affiliation, has a right to fully practice his or her faith

B. Recognizing the presence of religious minorities in Ogaden and the need to protect their rights

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) shall consider all attempts to deprive the right of our citizens to worship freely and without intimidation as a threat to our national security and a manipulation of the legitimate practice of religion. As such, the ONLF shall vigorously work to promote the right of all persons to worship freely and without fear of persecution regardless of religious affiliation

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) categorically rejects the manipulation of religious teachings to justify violent and criminal acts targeted at civilians.

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) is duty bound to defend all the peoples of Ogaden regardless of religious affiliation. It further affirms to take firm steps and measures against all acts of terrorism as a threat to our national security and a diversionary tactic from our just struggle for national self-determination.

HUMAN & CIVIL RIGHTS

1. ON RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

A. Noting the misery caused by the blatant disregard for human rights in Ogaden by the Ethiopian occupation.

B. Affirming our intention to resist such violations with every legitimate means at our disposal

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) confirms that we shall adhere to all relevant international agreements on human rights including the Universal Declaration On Human Rights. As such, the ONLF as a matter of policy shall not engage non-combatants or civilian targets. In addition, the ONLF shall not indefinitely detain innocent civilians. Further, the ONLF shall offer clemency to all combatants who surrender on the battlefield and willingly comply with international norms of battlefield combat.

DEMOCRACY & TRANSPARENCY

1. ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

A. Recognizing that only democratic and transparent public institutions are best able to serve the needs of the people of Ogaden

B. Understanding that colonized peoples are unable express themselves freely and as such unable to hold governing authorities to account

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) pledges to remain democratic, transparent and independent. It further pledges to remain accountable only to the people of Ogaden. The ONLF also commits to maintain our system of checks and balances within our organization as well as a democratically elected governing authority.

2. ON POLITICAL EXPRESSION

A. Noting that the ONLF, as the vanguard of the people, has an obligation to protect their political rights

B. Recognizing that the policies of intimidation, harassment and arbitrary arrest are the trademarks of tyranny and commonplace in Ethiopia's repressive policies

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) fully recognizes the rights of the citizens of Ogaden to express their political viewpoint and freely organize and engage in other political activities without fear of persecution or intimidation. As such, ONLF pledges to protect the rights of citizens in territories under our control to engage in political activity so long as they do not deny the rights of others to do the same.

THE ECONOMY

1. ON ECONOMIC POLICY

A. Having witnessed the lack of economic development and the immense barriers to commerce as a result of the colonial administration in our country

B. Recognizing the instrumental role of economic policy on the social development of a nation and with the realization that limited government involvement, promotion of individual initiative and legal protection of private property are essential elements for economic growth.

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) affirms that we subscribe to a free market economic system with respect for private ownership and entrepreneurial liberty as a matter of principle.

2. ON ECONOMIC COLONIALISM

A. Noting the severe underdevelopment of our country as a result of a deliberate policy by the colonizer to thwart commercial initiatives of our citizens

B. Alarmed by attempts to auction off our natural resources such as oil and natural gas to foreign entities by the colonizer without our consent or knowledge.

C. Having witnessed the levying of unjust taxes to further finance the oppressive practices of the colonizer on our people

D. Recognizing that Ogaden has been deliberately economically isolated from the outside world by the colonizer.

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) affirms that we shall resist all attempts by the colonizer to economically paralyze and exploit our country and people to include most notably

- The levying unjust taxes on our people
- The illegal confiscation of private property
- The illegal exploitation of our natural resources such as Oil and Natural Gas
- All forms of unethical labor including forced and child labor
- The suppression of free currency exchange markets

In addition, the ONLF shall actively confront all other colonial practices designed to act as barriers to the conduct of normal and ethical commerce in Ogaden.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

1. ON PEACEFULL CO-EXISTANCE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

A. Noting that Ogaden, being a colony, has been denied the opportunity to develop mutually beneficial economic and political relations with our neighbors and the international community

B. Committed to establishing friendly relations with neighboring states and the international community despite our current predicament

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) shall seek to establish both formal and informal relations with members of the international community based on mutual respect and peaceful co-existence. We further recognize all international treaties relevant to the conduct of normal international relations between states which do not stand in conflict with our rights to self-determination.

2. ON RELATIONS WITH OTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

A. Noting the brutal tactics of the colonizer against various communities

B. Realizing the need to join hands with other oppressed peoples

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) shall pursue cooperative relations with other democratic entities struggling to reclaim the political rights of their respective peoples. The ONLF shall actively cooperate with others liberation movements opposed to the tyrannical Ethiopian empire-state in the planning and execution of initiatives which are mutually beneficial.

WOMEN, CHILDREN & MINORITIES

1. ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

A. Recognizing that our children are the most vulnerable members of our society

B. Noting that colonial policies have negatively impacted our children the most

C. Realizing the hardship associated with growing up under colonialism

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) shall use all resources at our disposal to safeguard our children from the brutal practices of the colonizer. The ONLF further pledges to actively encourage the establishment of local schools at the village level in Ogaden so that our children, who are currently denied access to education by the colonizer have the opportunity to become productive members of their community.

The ONLF further recognizes all relevant international treaties addressing the rights of the child including those stipulations forbidding the use of child labor etc.

2. ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN & THE ELDERLY

A. Noting that women and the elderly have suffered disproportionately under Ethiopian colonialism.

B. Recognizing that women in particular have been under represented in public life.

C. Realizing that without the active participation of women in our struggle for national self-determination and reconstruction we will not be able to fully implement our people's aspiration

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) affirms that we shall not discriminate based on gender in the administration of our organization and that we shall actively seek out and recruit women to take their rightful place in our struggle for national self-determination. The ONLF further pledges to preserve cultural norms respecting the position of elders in our society and to periodically consult the elders in our community, in accordance with tradition, when feasible.

ON THE ENVIRONMENT

1. ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS IN OGADEN

A. Noting the disastrous environmental impact of colonial policies in our country, specifically the steady degradation of our wildlife and water resources.

B. Recognizing that the colonizer implements policies in Ogaden without regard to environmental impact.

The Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) affirms that we shall confront all initiatives, which negatively impact our environment as a matter national duty to protect our environment for future generations.