

Call for Input to inform the High Commissioner's report to the Human Rights Council on the impact of casualty recording

Submission by Amhara Association of America (AAA) and Every Casualty Counts

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The [Amhara Association of America](#) (AAA) is a US-based not-for-profit organization that investigates and documents human rights violations against Amharas. AAA works with relevant governments and international institutions to advocate on behalf of the Amhara people and to hold perpetrators of war crimes and gross human rights violations to account.

AAA documents violent attacks against Amharas all over Ethiopia using a team of investigators who monitor human rights violations daily using a network of sources. Through this network, AAA has been the first to report several [massacres](#) of Amharas in remote areas in Ethiopia, particularly in the [Oromia](#), [Benishangul Gumez](#), and [Amhara](#) Regions.

AAA investigators gather information on casualties through a combination of means. These include conducting in-person visits to sites of violent incidents, interviewing survivors and witnesses in IDP camps, and undertaking remote interviews by phone. AAA also gathers and verifies information from government and security forces sources, and occasionally satellite images. AAA's public version reports are posted on its [website](#).

For more information, please contact info@amharaamerica.org.

Uses and impacts

AAA shares information on Amhara casualties widely, in order to raise awareness of the humanitarian situation and encourage international action. AAA's casualty data is [regularly quoted in news media](#). The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada has [used AAA casualty information in its responses to information requests](#) (country of origin information reports).

AAA engages with policymakers, primarily in the US and Canada, through regular briefings and submission of information based on casualty records to parliamentary commissions. For example, in December 2022, [AAA hosted a virtual congressional fly-in with nine US congressional offices](#), to press for action on killings of Amharas in the Oromia region of Ethiopia. Also in December 2022, AAA submitted a briefing based on its casualty records to the Canadian Subcommittee on International Human Rights. The [briefing highlighted evidence of gross human rights violations, war crimes, and genocidal acts](#) against Amharas in Northern Ethiopia, and urged the Committee to undertake an inquiry.

On February 6, 2023, [AAA, together with the Human Rights Centre of Pretoria University, submitted a complaint to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights](#) against the Ethiopian Government, based on evidence arising from AAA's casualty records. This evidence indicates that the state of Ethiopia bears responsibility for human rights violations committed by its agents, including Oromia Special Forces, against Amhara residents in West Wollega, East Wollega, Horo Guduru Wollega, Qelem Wollega and West Shewa Zones of the Oromia Region. These violations include, inter alia, widespread unlawful and extrajudicial killings. The complaint also submits that the Ethiopian state has failed to act to halt these human rights violations or to hold those responsible accountable, thereby further violating the rights of the victims and survivors under the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights.

Recommendations

- The international community should increase financial support for civil society-led casualty recording organisations. This is especially important in situations of armed violence where the state concerned has imposed access restrictions on external news media and independent investigators. In these circumstances, civil society initiatives rooted in local contacts may be the best and only sources of reliable casualty information.
- The international community should make use of the information provided by credible casualty recording organisations to inform its political and humanitarian responses. Detailed casualty records can provide a sophisticated degree of analysis of the unfolding situation and help identify emerging risks of atrocity crimes.