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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SL-SAG Condemns the Da'awale Massacre: A Tragic Echo of the 1988 Genocide

The Somaliland Strategic Advisory Group (SL-SAG) strongly condemns the heinous act of terror that unfolded in Da'awale, a village in the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia. The unprovoked attack, perpetrated by the Liyu Police and reportedly supported by Ogaden clan militias, resulted in the indiscriminate killing of scores of innocent civilians, including children, women, and elders. This barbaric act stands as a grave violation of human rights and justice.

Eyewitness accounts confirm that the Liyu Police, wearing the uniforms of the Somali Region State Police, carried out this atrocity. The attackers burned the village—a community that should have relied on their protection—and kidnapped respected elders who were present to foster a peaceful environment. This unprecedented act of violence has shocked the conscience of all and demands immediate accountability.

A Painful Reminder of the 1988 Isaaq Genocide

The massacre in Da'awale tragically mirrors the horrors of the 1988 genocide against the Isaaq people, orchestrated by Somalia's Siad Barre regime. That genocidal campaign, which saw the mass killing of tens of thousands, indiscriminate bombings, and the destruction of cities like Hargeisa and Burao, left deep scars that remain fresh in the memories of survivors and descendants.

Once again, we see a pattern of state-backed violence targeting the Isaaq community. The deliberate targeting and displacement of Isaaq civilians in contested areas like Harshen highlight a troubling continuity in the weaponization of ethnic divisions. Observers have noted that the Somali Regional State's administration, heavily influenced by the Ogaden clan, has increasingly exploited state resources—including the Liyu Police—to advance a narrow, clan-based agenda. Such actions perpetuate historical rivalries and risk plunging the region into further conflict.

Call for Justice and Accountability



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SL-SAG calls upon Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the Federal Government of Ethiopia to take decisive action in response to this tragedy. We urge the Ethiopian authorities to:

1. **Conduct a thorough investigation** into the Da'awale massacre and hold all perpetrators accountable.
2. **Ensure the protection of vulnerable communities** within the Somali Regional State.
3. **Promote reconciliation and justice** to prevent further atrocities rooted in ethnic and clan-based divisions.

Additionally, we call on international human rights organizations to investigate the incident and bring global attention to the systematic targeting of the Isaaq community. The international community must not remain silent as history threatens to repeat itself. The failure to act in 1988 enabled the genocide to unfold—we cannot afford to look away again.

Rejecting False Narratives and Divisive Propaganda

SL-SAG condemns those who attempt to deflect blame from the perpetrators to the civilian victims and the people of Somaliland. Holding press conferences with false narratives will not alter the truth. Who filmed themselves burning the village? Who forcefully abducted elders and fired live bullets at unarmed civilians in Da'awale? Such propaganda only serves to exacerbate tensions and hinder peace.

We urge the Somali Region State of Ethiopia to take immediate measures to ensure such atrocities are never repeated. We also call on all Somali clans to reject divisive politics and work toward unity and understanding. Peace can only prevail when we confront the truth and commit to justice for all.

Standing with the Victims

As the Isaaq community mourns this heartbreaking loss, SL-SAG reaffirms its solidarity with the victims and their families. This massacre is not just a loss of life but a stark reminder of the resilience and determination that have defined the Isaaq people



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throughout history. We remain committed to advocating for peace, justice, and the protection of vulnerable communities.

Let the tragedy of Da'awale serve as a turning point—a call to action for all who value justice and human dignity. Together, we must break the cycle of violence that has plagued this region for far too long.

On behalf of the Somaliland Strategic Advisory Group (SL-SAG)

The Somaliland Strategic Advisory Group is dedicated to promoting the statehood and sovereignty of the Republic of Somaliland and advocating for peace and justice in the Horn of Africa.

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