

# **PAFD's statement on current deal of the China-Ethiopia- Djibouti Gas Exploitation in Ogaden, Ethiopia**

**Issued by Peoples' Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (PAFD)**

March 10, 2016

The Ethiopian government's "development strategy," is founded on its policy of leasing millions of hectares of land to foreign investors, regardless of the rights and consequences for the local communities that depend on those lands. Implementation of this strategy as it is observed in Gambella, Oromia, Omo, Sidama and Benishangul-Gumuz involved grave human rights violations including coerced displacement, extrajudicial killings, political repression, and neglect of local livelihoods of the peoples and nations who have historically been marginalized and neglected by the governments. The foundation stone for a new mega gas project was laid on March 3, 2016, by the presence the Djiboutian President. The project is planned to install a natural gas pipeline, a liquefaction plant and an export terminal at Damerjog, Djibouti from the Ogaden as reported by Global Energy. PAFD believes that this is targeting the most vulnerable people on the continent, the Ogaden people.

Almost all the Ogaden territory are divided into 22 Concession Blocks are being offered unscrupulous corporations or countries by the TPLF/EPRDF regime—a government that is not democratically elected in a free and fair election and do not represent the peoples in Ethiopia. The Ogaden Somali nation, the true owner of the gas fields, is not a party to the land transactions between the TPLF/EPRDF and the third parties. The local Ogaden populace is neither consulted nor compensated for giving up these lands. The regime is uprooting the Ogadenis from their ancestral land and de-destroying the sacred sites and the rich and unique plant and animal resources. The people who are uprooted and became landless in this process are perishing from natural and the regime-made famine and are being forced to migrate to Europe and America. The regime is also employing other strategies that are emptying the Somalis from their territory. Since 2007, the TPLF led Ethiopian Government blockaded aid and trade, which is making life difficult for the millions of Somalis affected by famine, which is well known to the international community. During the last ten years the Ethiopian regime has used its army in Ogaden to displace the rural population from large tracts of the Ogaden grassland by burning traditional pasture rich areas in order to clear the land for oil exploration. It is crystal clear that enormous internal displacement is happening from EI-Kuran to Djibouti to clear for the land for planned pipelines.

The PAFD strongly denounces and unequivocally condemns this reckless land Concession policy of the TPLF/EPRDF government, which further disenfranchises and impoverishes the Ogaden people. The land transaction between the TPLF regime and the third parties displaces the rightful owners of the land—the Ogaden people—subjecting millions to further poverty, starvation, and death.

The PAFD warns the third parties to the Oppressed peoples land deals that their contracts are null and void as far as the Oppressed nations and the PAFD are concerned. We stress that they are entering into these contracts with a government that is not accountable to the people. Hence we call the third parties to immediately cease and desist from participation in such deals and transactions. This a pattern is an arc that stretches from displaced the border of Sudan to Somalia- displacement of thousands of Benishangul people near the grand Dam for “security reasons; confiscating the farmlands of Amhara people farmers in Amhara regions; disowning Oromo farmers in Addis Ababa Master plan and displacing whole communities in Omo, Gambela; destroying Sidama forests for Coffee plantations; and displacing thousands of Ogaden pastoralists from oil and Gas exploration sites.

The Ogaden people have endured subjugation, massacre and extra judicial killings, loss of freedom and dignity, political repression, poverty and famine, perpetrated by The TPLF/EPRDF regime. Hence PAFD calls upon, the Ogaden people and all other oppressed peoples, to stand up in unison against the TPLF’s regime until we all achieve our freedom and dignity, the right to influence our destiny including the use of our vital assets such as land, and a decent chance at escaping starvation and poverty.

Peace shall prevail!

Issued by Peoples’ Alliance for Freedom and Democracy (PAFD)

March 10, 2016