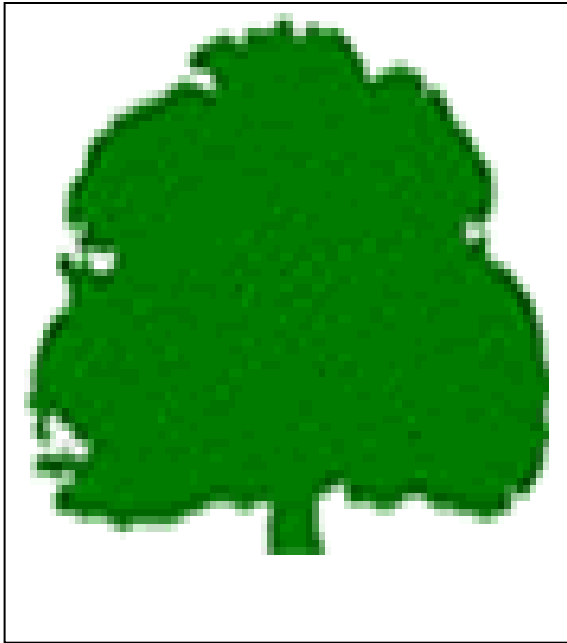


# OSA Newsletter

## **Oromo Studies Association**

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## 1. A Message from OSA President

Dear OSA Family,

I would like to extend my warm greetings to each of you on behalf of the OSA Executive Committee members and myself. I hope you all had a good start in the New Year. OSA Executive Committee has put together a committee that will investigate allegations dispatched by Dr. Caaltu Dheressa, Dr. Bahiru Gametchu and Mr. Abraham Mosisa on October 10, 2006. A memorandum that included four past OSA Presidents was sent to me through Dr. Ezekiel Gabissa and I would like to thank Dr. Ezekiel and all those individuals who took their time and endorsed the letter. I have also included part of the 2002 OSA Business Meeting minute that deals with OSA Constitutional Amendment and OSA Award Guidelines for your record.

I would like to thank OSA members and supporters who offered suggestions, comments and solutions to address the publicly discussed controversy within the OSA family. You, OSA members, demonstrated civility, patience and Oromo *safu'u* concerning the allegation. It is a state of maturity to back off and take time to objectively and dispassionately evaluate the whole episode without bias but with open mind and factual merit. Allegations are just assertions that need to be proved with discovery of facts. We all well know that there is no winner in the blame game and internal squabbles. It is because of your farsightedness and settled resolve that OSA controversy is not littering the internet. OSA belongs to you and the Oromo cause and we all bear full responsibility to keep that forsaken name to the highest possible integrity. We have one OSA and let us keep it honored and cherished forever.

OSA Executive Committee understands the magnitude of its responsibility and has spent many hours discussing how to address the allegation dispatched by Dr. Caaltu et al. (2006) although it was not addressed to it. When such serious allegations were raised and widely distributed to a worldwide audience, it is an obligation of elected OSA Officers to address the issue head on so that the truth will be known and OSA members will have a chance to deliberate on it. Hence, an independent and impartial OSA Ad hoc inquiry committee (ICOM) that will thoroughly study the matter and report its findings to the OSA family through its President has been formed. The ICOM members are Dr. Abebe Adugna, Dr. Ayalew Kanno, Dr. Daniel Ayana and Mr. Ibssa Ahmed (not in any particular order). They were selected by OSA Executive Committee members from a pool of potential candidates. The ICOM will thoroughly investigate whether OSA bylaws and/or past practices were violated as alleged by Dr. Caaltu et al. (2006). All ICOM are OSA members, reputable individuals and are committed to the wellbeing of OSA and the Oromo cause. They volunteered to serve on ICOM to conduct a transparent and objective investigation that will seek and find nothing but the whole truth independently. The committee has been given specific mandates to follow and specific questions to address concerning the crux of the issues raised in the allegations. It will complete its report ahead of the 2007 OSA Annual Conference.

This committee has a unanimous support of OSA Executive Committee members and I do have great respect and full confidence in each of them personally. I believe they will stand to the challenge of the task and do a superb job. I urge you to support their effort in anyway you can and fully cooperate if you are requested to do so and provide your service if your help is needed to accomplish their task.

I believe OSA has taken a first step in the right direction to solve this issue to the satisfaction of its members. Please contact the ICOM members if you have any suggestions, comments, information and/or questions through their individual e-mails given below. It is my personal plea that the committee be given a chance and cooperative environment to complete its inquiry. Since this issue is in the hand of ICOM now, it will do no good for OSA or ICOM to discuss this issue through OSA mail server and/or other media outlets anymore. It is my personal wish and plea that all public display of documents related the allegation and responses be removed from any public domain for the sake of common sense and for the good of OSA. At the end, it is you, the active OSA members who will have the ultimate power to make the necessary verdict and shape the future of OSA. Again, I urge you to get involved constructively and move on beyond the current mind set. I believe the truth will be known without any compromise and OSA will be stronger as the result of this gratuitous exercise.

The e-mails of ICOM members are:

Dr. Abebe Adugna ([aadugna@verizon.net](mailto:aadugna@verizon.net))  
Dr. Ayalew Kanno ([kannoa@msu.edu](mailto:kannoa@msu.edu))  
Dr. Daniel Ayana ([dayana@ysu.edu](mailto:dayana@ysu.edu))  
Mr. Ibssa Ahmed ([Karrayyu@optonline.net](mailto:Karrayyu@optonline.net)).

The following is a full text of an e-mail I received from Dr. Ezekiel that also supports the action OSA executive committee took concerning the OSA controversy.

> Ezekiel Gebissa <[egebissa@kettering.edu](mailto:egebissa@kettering.edu)> 1/4/2007 10:28 PM  
>>>  
Gobena,

It took sometime to get a consensus. I know the exec. comm. is past the stage this group was prepared to suggest, but it's good for the record.

Ezekiel

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Memorandum

4 January 2007  
Dr. Gobana Huluka  
OSA President

Dear Dr. Gobena

The African Studies Association (ASA) held its annual conference in San Francisco 16-19 November 2006. As Africanists, the undersigned members of the Oromo Studies Association (OSA) took part in the proceedings of the conference by presenting papers and participating in Round Table discussions. We are happy to report that OSA was represented well at the ASA.

In addition to conference related activities, we also took sometime out to interact and engage in discussions of various issues of mutual concern. That five past presidents of OSA were present at the conference was purely serendipitous, but we enjoyed each

other's company immensely. Naturally and predictably, the issue of the controversy surrounding OSA came up in our very collegial exchanges.

After an extended discussion, we agreed that an independent body formed by the OSA Executive Committee would be the best available means to look into the current controversy and make recommendations to OSA members. We encourage the Executive Committee to make solving this controversy its utmost priority and urge all OSA members to make positive contributions to advance OSA objectives.

Mohammed Hassen  
Guluma Gemedda  
Daniel Ayana  
Asefa Jalata  
Ezekiel Gebissa

## **2. 2002 OSA Constitutional Amendments**

The full text of the 2002 Constitutional Amendments to OSA bylaws that was included in the minute of the Business Meeting is given below. Thus, OSA bylaws are the one currently posted on OSA website and the following amendments. The full text of these amendments will soon be incorporated to OSA bylaws and will be posted at OSA website. Please take your time to read this important document.

**The Oromo Studies Association (OSA)  
The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
Business Meeting  
Howard University, Washington D.C.  
July 28, 2002**

### **5. Constitutional Amendment**

On behalf of the BD, Bonnie Holcomb proposed the following amendments to the OSA Constitution.

A. Proposed amendments concerning the Board of Directors.

To ensure continuity in the work of the BD, the amendment proposes to stagger the term of office of BD members.

Approved: unanimous

a. In regard to the composition of BD members, the amendment seeks to allow for six members to be elected to the Board of Directors.

b. Approved: 31-1-0.

B. Proposed amendments concerning the Executive Committee.

a. To ensure continuity in the work of the EC, the amendment proposes to transform the office of the vice president into that of president-elect. In the first year, the president elect shall serve in the capacity of vice president and shall assume the presidency in the following year.

Approved 24-0-4

b. In regard to the term of office of EC members, the amendment proposes that the president serve for one year. All other members shall serve for two years.

Approved 24-0-4

### C. Implementation

Implementation of the term of office for the members of BD shall be determined by drawing a lottery. Two members will serve for three years, two will serve for two years, and two will serve for one year.

Approved: 33-0-0

D. The BD proposes to amend the constitution to posit that elected officers assume office within one month of their election.

Approved: unanimous

E. Bonnie Holcomb proposed, on behalf of the BD, that an ad hoc committee be elected to conduct elections to OSA governing bodies. Moved by Thomas Kenea, seconded by Bonnie Holcomb.

Motion passed: 31-0-2

## 3. OSA Award Guidelines

This document is already posted at OSA website ([http://www.oromostudies.org/Other\\_Publication.htm](http://www.oromostudies.org/Other_Publication.htm)) in PDF format. All relevant OSA documents will be posted at OSA website for easy accessibility.

### OSA Guidelines and Criteria for Recognition and Award Giving

#### Background

Since the early 1990s, the Oromo Studies Association has been recognizing and awarding institutions and individuals who have made distinguished contributions to the development of Oromo scholarship and advanced the objectives of the Association. At

their joint meeting on July 21, 1995, the Board of Directors and Executive Committee had agreed “to speed up the formulation of award giving criteria.” At its Toronto meeting, held on July 28, 2000, the Board of Directors has again raised the issue and decided to “assume responsibility” for granting awards. Then it was agreed to hold further discussions and develop guidelines and criteria for award giving. But, so far, no clear guidelines and criteria were established to handle this matter. Each year, the Executive Committee, usually the President, nominated the names of awardees. The final decision was made by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors jointly. The process has worked well so far.

It is, however, necessary to establish objective criteria and standard for future recognitions and awards. Now, in accordance with earlier decisions of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, the following guidelines and criteria were proposed by the President, discussed by the Board and the Executive Committee, and adopted.

#### A. Categories and Criteria

1. **Institution(s)** which has made a major financial and material contribution
  - a) to the development of Oromo scholarship.
  - b) to hold Oromo conference(s) and workshops.
  - c) to publish the *Journal of Oromo Studies*, OSA conference proceedings and other texts.
  - d) to host other Oromo Studies events.

#### 2. Individual(s)

##### a) Scholarship:

Someone who has made a distinguished contribution to Oromo scholarship by publishing book(s) and important article(s) in

reputed scholarly journals or by editing journals and books on the Oromo.

**b) Service:**

Someone who has made a distinguished

- i) contribution to the development of OSA by providing leadership and scholarly inspiration.
- ii) effort in organizing OSA conferences, seminars and workshops.

**B. Nomination**

1. Institution(s) and individual(s) can be nominated by the Board, Executive Committee or OSA members.
2. A member who nominates someone for recognition and award should submit a brief statement regarding the prospective awardee's contributions based on the criteria in Section A above. All nominations should be made by June 30.
3. Nominee(s) or prospective awardee(s) could include any institution(s) or individual(s) who meet(s) the criteria under Section A above, but active Board Chairperson and the President could not be considered for an award or recognition before their term of office expires.
4. Nominations will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and recommended to the Board of Directors for final decision.
5. The Board makes the final decision.

**C. Certificate of Recognition and Plaque**

All awardees will receive a **Certificate of Recognition** signed by the Board Chairperson and the President. Those who made greater contribution could also receive a **certificate of recognition and a plaque**.

**Minneapolis, Minnesota  
July 27, 2001.**

## **4. Reminder for Annual Conference Panels and Titles**

I would like to thank those of you who sent to me your panel titles, individual titles and summary and even abstracts. The rest of you still have about three weeks to submit your titles and summary for 2007 OSA Annual Conference. I know Oromos have a very rich oral traditions, but until the primacy of oral knowledge accessibility and transfer reigns, it is OSA's responsibility to document everything Oromo in digital contemporary literature. Hence, please bring your research, experience, and observation to OSA conference and it will be part of the proceedings and will expand the Oromo literature that is immensely missing or very scarce at best. Please plan to come and share your settled thoughts and your data with fellow Oromos and believe me you will never regret it.

Again, here are some of the suggested panels based on our past experiences, but by no means complete or exhaustive.

- 1. Current Challenges and Opportunities for Oromo Quest for Self-Determination**
- 2. Resource Mobilization for Oromo National Struggle**
- 3. Oromo Religions (past, present and future)**
- 4. Norms of Oromummaa: Do's and Don'ts**
- 5. Nationalism, Ethnicity and Democracy in the Horn**
- 6. The Role of Oromo Youth in Liberation movement**
- 7. The Role of Oromo Women in Oromo Struggle**
- 8. Human Rights Violation in Oromia**
- 9. Political Economy of Oromia**
- 10. Health Status of Oromia**
- 11. Environmental Degradation in Oromia**

12. Oromo Language, Tradition and Culture
13. Gada Democracy
14. The State of Oromo Politics
15. Role of Art in Oromo National Struggle
16. Globalization and National Liberation movement
17. US and EU Policies Towards the Horn
18. Sidama Prospective, Somali prospective,
19. Etc, etc, etc.

The due date for tentative title and a summary is BEFORE or ON February 28, 2007. No more procrastination please!

Please send your title and summary to my e-mail at [hulukgo@auburn.edu](mailto:hulukgo@auburn.edu). As last year's, your abstract will be included in the 2006 OSA Proceedings.

**2006 OSA Proceedings:** Please send your 2006 presentation manuscript to Dr. Beyan H. Asoba ([bhasoba@msn.com](mailto:bhasoba@msn.com)) or to my e-mail as soon as possible if you have not already done so. Use any software accessible to you and send it as an attachment file.

Together, we can do more!

Nagaan,

*Gebana Huluka*

OSA President

<http://www.oromostudies.org>