

Oromo Political Parties Merge

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Five Oromo political parties namely the Oromo Abbo Liberation Front, Oromo Liberation Unity Front, Oromo Liberation National Party, Geda System Party and Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement signed yesterday an agreement for their merger and formation of one party-Front for the Forces of Oromo Struggle (FFOS).

Yesterday's announcement comes a day after members of another opposition party the Coalition for Unity and Democracy CUD announced a similar move.

"We five Oromo political parties have decided to coordinate our efforts aiming to translate into action the principle of self - determination which is provided in the nation's Constitution, but has never been properly implemented." the parties said during a press conference they jointly called at the Addis Ababa Hilton.

They said that they would continue to struggle for the Oromo peoples' affairs in accordance to the country's Constitution.

"We are talking of the right to run our regional affairs by our selves. Ethiopia is characterized as having diversified societies, we consider this diversity to be a factor for our unity, and not for disintegration," said Bulcha Demekessa, who was chairman of the Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM).

"As Ethiopians and as Oromos we are committed for true and genuine federal system to every one. We are not ready to accommodate a rule from the central government in our day to day affairs in our regional state." He said.

Before the merger the Oromo Federalist Party had won 11 seats in the Federal Parliament.

As FFOS the party hopes to gain more seats in both parliaments, ones the final result is hammered out after completion of investigations into the election complaints.

"We disagree with political parties that say ethnic based federalism has to be abolished. We are for Ethiopia that respects diversity. We are hundred percent loyal to Ethiopia's federalism system," said Musa Hajji Adem, who before the merger was Secretary General of Oromo Abbo Liberation Front.

The FFOS has also called other Oromo parties to join it.