

Human Rights and Security in Ogaden

16 March, 14.00

European Parliament, Altiero Spinelli Building, Room A3H1

Film screening (excerpts)

Silent Cry

Ms. Ana-Maria Gomes, MEP

Mr. Marino Busdachin, UNPO

Mr. Abdullahi Mohamed, African Rights Monitor

Ms. Xasan Ruqiyo, Ogaden Communities & Civil Society Association

The hearing, whose topic is “Human Rights and Security Situation in Ogaden,” will be opened by **Ms. Ana Gomes MEP**, who is chairing the event, and **Mr. Marino Busdachin**, General Secretary of UNPO. **Mr. Abdullahi Mohamed**, from African Rights Monitor, and **Ms. Xasan Ruqiyo** from the Ogaden Communities & Civil Society Association will be speaking on behalf of Ogaden.

There will also excerpts from a film, *Silent Cry*, a grassroots documentary produced by British students, reporting the lives of Somali refugees from Ogaden. These stories were discovered accidentally when the students, visiting Nairobi on vacation, met Omar, a taxi driver who shared with them his personal tragic story. The students then went to the Ifo Refugee Camp, in Northern Kenya, where they interviewed several refugees, including victims of rape and torture.

Ogaden is a region in eastern Ethiopia with a majority population of Somalis. The Ethiopian government has waged a long-term war against the Ogaden, suppressing the region and its people. Years of neglect and war have left Ogaden in a state of turmoil, and human rights abuses by the Ethiopian government are commonplace. There is limited infrastructure, and due to Ethiopia’s corrupted federal structure, no political power on the part of the people of Ogaden to develop the area.

The hearing is sponsored by Ms Ana Gomes, MEP from the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu) of the European Parliament in collaboration with the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (<http://www.unpo.org/>).