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1. In mid 2012, I convinced myself it was time to start a sustainable Oromo media. I reached at that conclusion because I observed that a handful of Internet radio programs and a few TV broadcasts had started in the Diaspora. This hinted to me there was sufficient manpower and expertise to establish a strong media. I discussed the proposal with some people including Abraham Mosisa, Israe'l Soboqaa, and Abdi Fixee; they all encouraged me to push the idea forward.
2. I next contacted Jawar Mohammed and Mohammed Ademo separately. Jawar was unhappy that I shared the idea with Mohammed Ademo but I did not understand the reason at the time.
3. Soon after that OMN core committee of nine members was established. The members were: 1) Jawar Mohammed, 2) Arfase Gamada, 3)Girma Tadesse, 4) Micah Cirri, 5) Abdi Fiixee, 6) Ayyaantuu Tibeesso, 7) Mohammed Ademo, 8) Tigist Geme, and 9) Solomon Ungashe. Of these 9 members Ayyantuu Tibeesso was unable to take and we did not fill her place. We conducted once or twice weekly teleconferences to move the project forward.
4. In late 2012 I went to Oromia and one of my responsibilities was to establish OMN on the ground there. I was tasked to recruit journalists who will work for us as reporters either on a permanent basis or as part time freelancers. I was working very closely with Mohammed Ademo on this matter.
5. In Mid 2013 Mohammed Ademo told us at our weekly teleconference that there was an opportunity to get Oromo issue aired on Aljazeera. We discussed about it and delegated Mohammed Ademo and Jawar Mohammed to take part in it. That led to Jawar declaring, "I am Oromo First" on TV and that as we know enraged the Habesha's.
6. Shortly after that incident, Jawar suggested we should use Oromo First campaign to raise fund for OMN. We all agreed and decided that other committee members must take part in the campaign too. The idea of me coming back to the US to take part in it was raised by Jawar himself but we decided against it because there were other things I was doing there and I also personal matters to attend to. So everybody else took part in the Oromo First campaign and we decided to end it in September 2013.
7. Once money was generated from Oromo communities, Arfase and I were assigned to see to it that the money was transferred to OMN account. This proved very difficult and OMN problem started at this point. Unbeknownst to us, Jawar Mohammed had created a parallel committee called Principal Coordinating Committee, PCC for short. Jawar and his wife Arfasse were members of this committee. Mohammed Ademo asked Jawar what the role of the PCC was. He assured us its role is simply to collect the fund and transfer it to OMN. That proved to be false. Week after week and month after month Arfasse and Jawar who were supposed to talk to PCC members and transfer the money to OMN kept giving one reason after another for failing to do so. Out of more than \$300,000 collected by Oromo community only \$20,000 was transferred to OMN account. We were very frustrated.

8. Meanwhile, Mohammed Ademo drafted bylaws and code of conduct for OMN. They were all excellent. I suggested a minor change that was accepted. Only Jawar Mohammed disagreed on a clause pertaining to politics and media and promised he will write an alternative clause instead. We agreed. We waited for more than 6 six weeks but he never produced the alternative clause he had promised.
9. Then it was time to nominate people to be on Board of Trustees. Jawar Mohammed suggested that members of the PCC should take part in the nomination and we all agreed. A joint OMN-PCC teleconference was called. The PCC had 11 members including Jawar and Arfase. The number of effective OMN members was hence 6. The discussion became the discussion of 6 against 11. The first topic to be discussed was criteria for selection of board members. A proposal was made by OMN founding member that those elected to be on board of trustees must not have a high level active participation in a political organization. All PCC members disagreed very strongly. There was no listening at all. The PCC did not come to discuss, they came to dictate and they had the vote to do whatever they wanted. They therefore hand picked Board members without participation from us.
10. Early on we had discussed we will hire professional media person for short term to help us lay the foundation in Minneapolis. We wanted that person to be someone who has TV background and practical experience and we were looking for such a person.
11. Immediately after the first PCC-OMN joint meeting, Jawar convened PCC meeting and they decided that he will quit his studies at Colombia and move to Minneapolis to lead the founding effort. That meant they have over turned our earlier decision to hire an expert in media affairs. Mohammed Ademo and I said we should instead hire an experienced person. We also argued because Jawar is a prominent person in Ethiopian politics, the idea of him running OMN, a supposedly independent media, does not sound right. The PCC members all agreed with what Jawar said and Mohammed Ademo and I resigned the next morning. Tigist Geme followed us shortly after that.
12. It is important to grasp this chain of events. Jawar Mohammed established a separate committee called PCC that his wife chaired. This committee controlled the fund raised from Oromo communities. Because of good will we never objected to PCC joining OMN committee in the selection of board of directors. That turned out to be a fatal mistake on our part. With that action, Jawar put himself in a position to single handedly pick OMN board and executive committee members.
13. Dr. Birhanu Dirbaba is supposedly the editor in chief for OMN. But in reality Jawar has been acting as the editor in chief as well. Dr. Birhanu had resigned once over disagreement with what Jawar has been doing. He was rehired again after a prolonged intense plea by OMN board members. There is no guarantee that he will not leave again.
14. Micah Cirrii, one of the founding members resigned from OMN less than two months ago protesting Jawar Mohammed's dictatorial actions.

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15. Girma Tadese, Arafase and Jawar have agreed to make Jawar the editor in chief of OMN. The few people remaining with OMN rejected this idea and that is why it has not been announced yet.
16. Contrary to what OMN has announced, Ahmed Yasin and Kadiro Elemo quit protesting Jawar Mohammed's dictatorial behavior. It surprises me why people do not call them and ask what the truth is.
17. The exodus from OMN will continue unless solution is found immediately. The following actions are desperately needed.
 - a. OMN board must appoint independent investigators. The investigators must speak to all parties concerned.
 - b. Jawar's role in the organization, and the pay he deserves must be decided and made public.
 - c. A new executive director must be appointed in a transparent manner. Appointing someone hand picked by Jawar again is not going to solve the problem.
 - d. The members of the Board of directors of a company are elected by people who invested in it. Oromo communities around the world are the investors in OMN. They should be the ones who can nominate and elect board of directors. This has to be codified in the OMN bylaws and implemented immediately.

SOLOMON UNGASHE