



CARD

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CENTER FOR ADVANCEMENT OF
RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

MAKE DEMOCRACY THE ONLY RULE OF GAME!

Public statement regarding CARD's suspension by ACSCO

22 November 2024

Dear Partners, Supporters and Broader Community,

The Center for Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD) would like to address an important matter concerning our operations. On the 14th of November 2024, we received a letter from the Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO) indicating the suspension of CARD's operations. The letter alleges a “lack of political neutrality” and accuses CARD of engaging in “activities deemed contrary to the interests of the country”.

While CARD categorically contests all allegations made against it and maintains that ACSO did not follow the requisite legal procedures, such as providing prior notification of the issue, conducting a transparent investigation and involving CARD in the process, CARD has nevertheless complied with the decision and ceased all operations to prioritize constructive engagement. CARD remains strictly committed to its legal mandate and categorically denies any involvement in political activities as our organization is steadfastly neutral in its approach and practice.



We assert our unwavering commitment to transparency, impartiality, and the democratic principles that define CARD's mission. Since our registration on 24 July 2019, CARD has been instrumental in advancing human rights and strongly advocating for and working towards democratization in Ethiopia. Partnering with over 40 national and international organizations and impacted hundreds of thousands of communities, advancing human rights and fostering a democratic mass culture through innovative programs and strategic interventions.

Through initiatives like the Werdwet Research Fellowship, CARD has empowered youth and human rights defenders with the skills to advocate for peace and equality, even in challenging times. We have championed media freedom and digital rights, enabling journalists and citizens to access information, express themselves freely, and safely engage on digital platforms. Additionally, by monitoring Ethiopia's autonomous administrations, CARD has established critical benchmarks to promote accountability and constructive competition in governance.

Guided by our motto, "*Making Democracy the Only Rule of the Game,*" CARD continues to advocate for non-violence and peaceful, inclusive solutions to Ethiopia's socio-political challenges.

We are actively engaging with ACSO and urging them to reverse the decision, address the concerns raised, clarify misunderstandings, and resolve this matter collaboratively and amicably.

As we navigate this challenge, we humbly request your support and understanding. To maintain the integrity of this process, we kindly notify you that we are differing public or legal actions until we have communicated the outcome of our ongoing dialogue with ACSO. We will continue to provide timely updates as the situation evolves as we exhaust all remedies to the resolution of the issue.

CARD remains resolute in its mission to cultivate safe and vibrant civic, media, and digital spaces for the protection of human rights and the promotion of democracy. We deeply appreciate your support and encouragement as we work toward a positive resolution.

With gratitude and resolve,

Center for Advancement of Rights and Democracy (CARD)