

Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)



Press Statement May 26, 2021

[\(Translation\)](#)

Like the people of Tigray, the TPLF is a victim and hence there is no rationale for equivalence with criminals.

First, the TPLF applauds the decision of President Biden's administration, following Senate Resolution #97, to take concrete economic and diplomatic sanctions and measures against the regimes of Isaias Afewerki and Abiy Ahmed.

President Biden's official statement made on May 23, 2021, through Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, on the measures his government is taking against the invading enemies of the people of Tigray is timely, appropriate, and necessary. However, we are puzzled that the visa restriction announced by Secretary Blinken included members of the TPLF.

The Biden administration, the international community, and supporters of the Tigrayan people's struggle should know that the TPLF has not committed any crime either on any people or institutions and considers itself part and parcel of the people of Tigray. It is thus a victim of the barbaric acts of the invaders. Isaias Afewerki's outrageous public statements that it is "game over" for the TPLF, and that the Biden administration is "trying to resuscitate it" coupled with Abiy Ahmed's assertion to his parliament that the "TPLF is today like powder blown into the air that can never be brought together", stand out as unequivocal admissions by the two invaders that like the people of Tigray the TPLF is a target and victim.

When senior former TPLF leaders like Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin and others were killed at close range and 86 years old Sebhat Nega and others were taken prisoner, these invading forces had officially announced that the TPLF was annihilated. This is concrete proof that the TPLF itself was a target and on the receiving end of the atrocities. Therefore, the Biden administration and other partners should realize that including the victim in the visa restriction is neither reasonable nor just.

We remind the Biden administration and all partners that the TPLF never maintained an army after the demise of the Derg regime thirty years ago. Nor does the Tigray Regional Government's constitution allow for any political party to own one. Therefore, the TPLF has no army of its own. At the moment, the army of the Government of Tigray, which was elected by

2.7 million people in September 2020, is leading the people's war against the invading forces.

As part of the people of Tigray and the government, the TPLF does play a major role. Yet it must be emphasized that it is a victim of the invasion and there could be no rationale that likens it to the dictators who are committing countless atrocities. Hence, we call on the Biden Administration to reexamine and reconsider its decision of imposing visa restrictions on members of the TPLF.

In conclusion, we reiterate and underscore the need for an independent investigation of the genocide, ethnic cleansing, and all forms of war crimes perpetrated on the people of Tigray by an independent international body. We again call for the immediate commencement of that investigation. The TPLF is ready to contribute its share in facilitating the investigation into all crimes committed.

Tigray will prevail.

26 May 2021