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Tigray External Affairs Office

Briefing From The National Government of Tigray

September 6, 2021

I. Humanitarian Concerns

The Disaster and Risk Management Agency has recorded 150 death due to starvation in August in Mai Kinetal, Kola Tembien and Tanqua Milash in the central zone, Hawzen in the Eastern Zone and Silawa and Enda Mekoni in the Southern Zone as well as IDP camps in Shire. One million people are at risk of fatal famine if they are prohibited from receiving life-saving aid within the next few days. The size of the population in need of emergency assistance now stands at 5.3 million. Since June 28th, 270,000 mt of food aid should have arrived in Tigray to fend off large-scale famine, and sustain the 6.8 million people in need of emergency assistance. To date, 5,200 mt or 1.9% has arrived in Tigray.

The complete depletion of food stocks has meant that IDP camps are receiving no aid and host communities, now running out of food themselves, are no longer able to support them. The third round of food distribution originally scheduled to be completed in August is yet to start while the second round is yet to be completed as there is a 46 percent gap in required food items.

According to a report published by OCHA on 2 September 2021, less than 10% of required humanitarian cargo, 2.2% of necessary operational cash and 28% of the fuel necessary has reached Tigray since 12 July. Lack of fuel in particular hinders cargo trucks from making return trips.

It has been 59 days since Abiy Ahmed made personal assurances of reinstatement of public services in Tigray to the United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres. The Government and people of Tigray note with concern the Secretary-General's unwillingness to

hold Abiy Ahmed accountable as millions of Tigrayans fall prey to starvation under his watch.

II. Agrarian and Livestock Concerns

According to the same report by OCHA, only 320,000 hectares of the 1.3 million hectares otherwise farmed has been planted and only 25 to 50 % of regular cereal production will be available this annum with a maximum expected yield of 13%. There have been desert locust sightings in 19 Woredas across Tigray; the consequences of an invasion of this kind, in addition to the immeasurable damage the Ethiopian, Eritrean and Amhara belligerents have caused by deliberately targeting agricultural communities, under the debilitating circumstances of a siege which prohibits the possibility of a coordinated response, is excruciatingly painful to imagine.

Mixed crop-livestock economy contributes to nearly half of all agricultural production in Tigray. As with other health facilities, veterinary institutions, vaccines, and equipment were the target of deliberate systematic destruction risking millions of livelihoods. There were previously 198 veterinary clinics in Tigray of which 183 have been partially or completely damaged. Current estimates indicate that over 17 million USD is required to rehabilitate these infrastructures.

III. State Terror and Hate Crimes

The Ethiopian state's engagement in profiling, psychological and physical acts of terror goes unabated. Tigrayans continue to be dehumanized and vilified by Ethiopian media, civil society, and senior members of Abiy Ahmed's regime, in an effort to entrench the rhetorical basis for genocide. The regime announced the closure, delicensing and suspension of 52,227 Tigrayan owned businesses.

Reports continue to surface of mutilated Tigrayan bodies along the rivers of western Tigray as genocidal persecutions intensify in Wolqait. Tigrayans are being forcibly disappeared in

their tens of thousands and subjected to inhumane treatment at internment camps across the country, including in Wolqaita. Reports of abuses in western Tigray have increased in correspondence with an Eritrean military build up in the area. The Government appreciates the efforts of all journalists and human rights advocacy groups that have worked to expose the genocidal war against Tigrayans, despite the Abiy Ahmed regime's exorbitant measures to suppress information and silence victims. We request that more effort be put into uncovering the siege's protraction and the innumerable transgressions on humanity the people of Tigray have faced.

IV. External Affairs

A letter underlying the commitment of the National Regional Government of Tigray to a negotiated ceasefire was dispatched to more than 56 heads of states and government as well as multilateral organizations by President Debretsion Gebremichael. The letter highlights the genesis of the war and indicates ways out of the crisis. The President underscored, once again, his government's readiness to engage in an internationally mediated and all-inclusive negotiation for ceasefire and cessation of hostilities.

V. Other Concerns

This week USAID and OCHA announced the death of an additional 11 aid workers from the Relief Society of Tigray (REST), this brings the number of murdered aid workers to 23, 22 of whom are Tigrayans.

September 9 will mark a year since the much hailed regional elections were held. The people of Tigray's decision to exercise their right to vote and elect a legitimate government, a sacred liberal democratic right, has been punished with inconceivable atrocities perpetrated by those who found democracy posed a direct threat to their political ambitions.