



ENCDC



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To:

H.E. Mr. Pekka Haavisto,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland,  
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Helsinki, Finland

February 16, 2021

Dear Mr. P. Haavisto,

We the undersigned allied Eritrean Political Forces in exile are deeply saddened by the rapid escalation of a deadly conflict between the Federal Ethiopian Government with unwarranted support of the Government of Eritrea on the one hand and Regional State of Tigray on the other. In particular the indiscriminate air strikes and ground attacks directed to Tigray occurs at a challenging time as the people struggle to contain the impact of Covid-19 pandemic and a massive locust infestation overwhelming the region during the time of the annual harvest season. Human Rights Watch has rightly said in a report published on February 11 that the apparently indiscriminating shelling of urban areas was a violation of the laws of war.

The world is by now receiving reports of the devastating effect of war on the economy and livelihood of the people and its negative impact on peace and security of the entire region. We continue to witness catastrophic humanitarian crisis with millions of internally displaced people and new waves of refugees fleeing to neighboring Sudan.

Dear Sir,

We Eritreans are particularly worried about the fate of the 172 000 Eritrean refugees most of them in Tigray and Afar regions who have fled enforced military conscription, indefinite national service, lack of freedom of speech and movement and political persecution and imprisonment. The invading Eritrean army which still exerts control over two of the refugee camps, namely Shimelba and Hitsaats, has destroyed most of the buildings in the camps and abducted thousands Eritrean refugees and sent them back to Eritrea. The camps are now

closed by the Ethiopian government, and the whereabouts of their residents still unaccounted.

This is done in broad day light and in flagrant violation of international laws and norms. Unfortunately, the UNHCR High Commissioner Filippo Grandi's appeal to the prime minister of Ethiopia to address the situation as a matter of urgency has not been fulfilled.

Yours excellency,

Our allied forces in exile are aware that the Government of Finland had supported and continues to support the reforms and democratization policies initiated by PM Abiy Ahmed Ali of Ethiopia and that Finland along other Nordic countries works for regional peace, security and integration in the Horn of Africa. Therefore, we eagerly await the result of the ongoing European Union initiated dialogue and engagement under your leadership.

Our allied forces in exile also strongly believe that interests of the peoples of the Horn of Africa are complimentary and never mutually exclusive and building regional peace requires the acceptance by all of democratic values and norms and the belief in cooperation, dialogue and compromise in conflict resolution.

We would like to express our concern for the wellbeing of the civilian population of Tigray and Eritrean refugees in the area and appeal to Your Excellency and through you, to the European Union to:

- To ask the Ethiopian Government to guarantee the protection of Eritrean refugee in Tigray and Afar regions as well as in urban centers and allow the UNHCR to continue providing its services.
- Demand the immediate withdrawal of Eritrean troops from Tigray and impose sanctions on the members of government and impose an arms embargo of Eritrea.

- Put pressure on the Ethiopian Government to allow unfettered humanitarian access to Tigray and find ways of providing emergence food, water and, medical and sanitary supplies to the affected population;
- Condemn the Eritrean Government for its interference in the internal affairs of Ethiopia and demand its immediate withdrawal of its invasion forces;
- Send an independent group to Tigray to investigate the alleged indiscriminate killings including that of Eritrean refugees, the looting of property including church heritages and old manuscripts, systematic rape of women and wanton burning of crops.
- To call upon the Ethiopian government to halt the violence and resolve the conflict peacefully and engage in a genuine, inclusive and credible dialogue under the auspicious of a neutral international body;

Your Excellency,

A delegation of our allied forces is willing to explain to your excellency's government, our understanding of the recent developments inside Eritrea and the region as a whole and our endeavors to establish a constitutional and democratically elected government in Eritrea that abides by the rule of law in a digital meeting at a time of your convenience.

Sincerely Yours,

For/ the Chairpersons:

***ENCDC (Eritrean National Council for Democratic Change)***

***ENF (Eritrean National Front)***

***EPDP (the Eritrean People's Democratic Party)***

***UDC (Organization of Unity for Democratic Change)***

***UEJ (United Eritreans for Justice)***

***RSADO (Red Sea Afar Democratic Organization)***

***ENF-Hidri (Eritrean National Salvation Front)***

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Mrs. Theresa Zittling

Director for Unit for the Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Helsinki.