



**Address:** P.O. Box 215  
Burlington, MA 01803-3509 USA  
**Phone:** 781-552-8769  
**Fax::** 781-552-8770  
**Email:** : [TegaruChristians@gmail.com](mailto:TegaruChristians@gmail.com)

# GATEC MISSION

## In Support of

**His Holiness Abune Matias, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Archbishop of Axum,  
and Ichege of the See of Saint Taklehaimanot**

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God!" Amen!

We members of the Global Alliance of Tegar Evangelical Christians (GATEC) who reside in various countries around the world, collectively pronounce our full support to His Holiness Abune Mathias, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox church.

The Ethiopian prime minister Abiy Ahmed, his emissary president Isaiiah of Eritrea, special forces and militias of the Amhara regional state, the Republic of Somalia, with the support of drones from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) waged war against the government and people of Tigray which claimed the lives of thousands of civilians and displaced millions. Minors have been murdered in front of their parents, countless girls and women have been gang-raped, and personal and public properties have been looted or destroyed. Since the war started on November 4th, 2020 the people of Tigray have been subjected to atrocities unparalleled in the history of the country.

Abiy Ahmed and his allies deliberately blocked telephone lines, internet, radio, and television and denied access to independent media while at the same time, used government-controlled media to misinform the world about the war and the crimes. However, the international media outlets and human rights advocates were able to expose these atrocities. As a result, the European Union parliament, the USA, UK, the Netherlands, and other governments as well as the UN Security Council strongly condemned the genocide and ethnic cleansing taking place in Tigray and called the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments to refrain from these acts. Despite the international condemnation, however, the atrocities continue to this day.

His Holiness Abuna Mathias, as a spiritual leader of the largest and oldest church in Ethiopia, is supposed to uphold peace and condemn those who commit crimes against the people of Tigray and others. However, the Ethiopian government, the Synod, and various groups in the Church leadership kept his holiness under house arrest denying him the right to express his views to Ethiopians and the world. After six months of silence, His Holiness was able to appear on social media to denounce the atrocities in Tigray because the war aims to destroy not only the people and the government of Tigray but also religious icons (Tigray being the seat of the oldest churches and mosques in Africa) and cultural heritage. His holiness is not only the patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox church but also an Archbishop of the church of Axum. It is imperative, therefore, for him to talk about the atrocities committed on the people of Axum while preventing the looting and destruction of the church of Axum.



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We, members of GATEC, appreciate his holiness' attempt to voice the crimes being committed in Tigray under the disguise of law enforcement, and we denounce the government and its ally's pressure to silence him. Though it is uncharacteristic of church leaders and priests, we are not surprised by the acts of some of the archbishops and the clergy who openly supported the military campaign against the government and people of Tigray. The same 'spiritual leaders' who, even after the crimes were exposed by the international community did not care to say a word against the crimes, denounced his holiness' plea for restraint and call for a peaceful resolution. If they were honest and cared for their church, they would have expressed their disguise when the Eritrean army deliberately bombed ancient churches, mosques, and the killing of tens of priests serving in Tigray.

Hi holiness Abune Mathias has endured unmerited pressure and abuse from within his synod, the Ethiopian government, and the Amhara elite. These abuses are politically motivated and designed to stop him from executing his duties – caring for his congregations in Tigray and elsewhere who are suffering under the current government. We strongly condemn these attempts to silence him. As a spiritual leader, we believe it is his God-given duty to deliver words of advice and call for peace and restraint. As the crimes against the people of Tigray, their history, and religious assets continue, we encourage his holiness to pursue his teaching against it, call for a peaceful resolution and advocate that those who planned and executed the crimes be brought to justice.

On the day our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross, the world was consumed by total darkness. His followers felt helpless, were discouraged, and started to return to their old lives. However, the darkness was replaced by light and death by resurrection. The people of Tigray too will see their invaders and killers vanish, the shadow of darkness clear and days of hope and freedom emerge.

We pray the good Lord to grant the people of Tigray the peace they deserve.

**Thank you for your understanding,**

**GATEC**

**May 15, 2021**