OPEN LETTER

H.E. Ambassador Sven Jürgenson
The Permanent Representative of the Republic of Estonia to the United Nations
President of the Security Council for the Month of June
New York

H.E. Antony Blinken
Secretary of State of the United States
Washington DC

H.E. Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN)
New York, NY

H.E. Fernando Arias
Director-General of Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
Geneva

H.E. Jens Stoltenberg
Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
Brussels

H.E. Martin Griffiths
The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator
Geneva

H.E. Annette Weber
EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa
Berlin

H.E. Izumi Nakamitsu
UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs
New York

H.E. Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
Brussels
A Call for Immediate Intervention to Stop further use of Cluster Bombs and Incendiary Weapons on Civilians in Tigray

1. The Global Society of Tigray Scholars and Professionals (GSTS) notes that H.E. Mr Mark Lowcock has been succeeded by H.E. Mr Martin Griffiths. GSTS would like to extend its most profound appreciation for the leadership shown by Mr. Lowcock in his effort to address the causes and consequences of the war waged on the people of Tigray. We are pleased with the appointment of Mr. Martin Griffiths. We are hopeful that Mr Griffiths will employ all available resources under his mandate to end the deliberate starvation of the people of Tigray. GSTS believes that Mr. Griffith’s rich experience and leadership in mediation, and diplomacy will help ensure a principled UN leadership in the region and to bring a peaceful resolution of the civil wars in Ethiopia and the region at large.

2. GSTS offers sincere appreciation to Mr. Alexander Rondos, the former EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, for the outstanding work in mitigating the suffering of the region’s peoples. GSTS appreciates his exceptional knowledge of the political landscape of the region and the principled stance the EU has taken towards several constitutional crises, the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa.

3. GSTS also welcomes the appointment of Ms. Annette Weber as EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa. With her expertise and deep knowledge of the peace and security terrain of Ethiopia and the region, GSTS is hopeful that she will rally the EU and other envoys in the region to ending impunity, starvation and war. GSTS looks forward to supporting the new UN Humanitarian Chief Mr. Griffith and the EUSR Ms. Weber in their effort to bring an effective humanitarian system, peace and prosperity to our region.

4. GSTS would like to bring to the attention of the International Community and the new appointees that credible outlets are reporting on the Ethiopian government stockpiling of internationally prohibited cluster munitions and incendiary weapons for further use in what it is publicly calling a “final offensive” on the people of Tigray. Besides to these cluster bombs and incendiary and chemical weapons, GSTS’s internal reliable sources evidence that the new scorched-earth military campaign is to be carried with the support of newly imported military hardware, including drones and advanced multi-role missile-armed attack helicopters.

5. It has been reported by international media that the combined Ethiopian and Eritrean forces have repeatedly used internationally prohibited munition and incendiary chemicals that turned several Tigray settlements into ashes and delivered horrific and agonizing burns and death of civilians, as attested by several reports. For example, recently, cluster canisters and bombs have been used in aerial dropped in various parts of Tigray. From 25th February to 27th February 2021, the Ethiopian Airforce bombed civilian settlements in the Towns of Samre and Gijet in Tigray with the prohibited soviet-era cluster bombs, destroying more than 500 homes and health and education facilities. Since 16 June 2021, the same have widely reported using these incendiary weapons at Guya and Menji of Temben (near Abi Addi), killing civilians and animals.

prohibits using incendiary weapons against civilians and military targets located among civilians.

7. Characteristic of the Ethiopian government, it lied and vehemently denied using these prohibited munitions and weapons as it has done on several matters: from asserting that the war has no civilian casualties to denial of the presence of Eritrean troops and recently claiming that there is no starvation in Tigray. All claims, of course, stand disproved by the United Nations and other international reputed organizations and media outlets.

8. We appreciate that Mr. Mark Lowcock, the United Nations Humanitarian Chief’s calls for a full investigation in response to the Telegraph report. However, calls and public pronouncement are of no use if no action is taken to prevent further prohibited munitions and weapons.

9. The use of prohibited cluster munitions and incendiary weapons on civilians is yet another strand among the repertoire of cruel coordinated strategies that Ethiopia, Eritrean and Amhara forces have been carrying out since 4th November 2020, in a bid to exterminate the people of Tigray.

10. The stockpile of prohibited munitions and incendiary weapons are part of the new planned bloody offensive that will intensify mass atrocities, genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, rape and starvation as part of the war, which are being carried out by the combined Ethiopian, Eritrean and Amhara forces with utter contempt and disregard to calls from the international community. In this regard, the Global Society of Tigray Scholars and Professionals calls on the United Nations and the Security Council to:

   a. Urgently establish an independent OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), similar to the one deployed in Syria (Resolution 2235, 2015) into the use of Cluster Munition and incendiary weapons on the civilian population of Tigray and hold the perpetrators accountable;
   b. Declare a no-fly zone over Tigray;
   c. Impose arms embargo and economic and financial sanctions on Eritrea and Ethiopia;
   d. Establish a mechanism and urgent timeline (deadline) to ensure the immediate, unconditional, and verifiable removal of all Eritrean forces as well as Amhara troops out of the territories of Tigray;
   e. Ensure rapid, unconditional, unfettered, and sustained delivery of humanitarian aid and items essential to survival, including establishing a ‘lifeline humanitarian corridor’ from Sudan to Tigray under a de-militarised route designated for safe passage of humanitarian supplies and ‘air-lifting’ of humanitarian aid to areas inaccessible by land;
   f. Ensure the protection of civilians, refugees and the safety and security of international humanitarian aid workers, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and deploy monitoring and verification Commission in Tigray, with international civil and security presences, with appropriate equipment and personnel to protect civilians, deterring renewed hostilities, maintaining and where necessary enforcing a ceasefire, and ensuring the removal of Eritrean and other forces;
   g. Uphold resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security, as well as resolution 2417 against “using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare” and take
all effective measures to address violations of humanitarian laws and human rights by the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments and Amhara forces;

h. Impose **targeted punitive measures against the violators and spoilers** in the form of targeted individual sanctions, travel bans and asset freezes directly on those overseeing breaches of international humanitarian laws and violations of human rights;

i. **Refer the situation in Tigray to the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court** to investigate grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and other violations of international humanitarian law, including those committed by Eritrean forces, use of white phosphorous and other incendiary and chemical weapons on civilians, and the use of drones.

Sincerely,
The Global Society of Tigray Scholars and Professionals (GSTS)
22nd June 2021

CC:
- All Members of the Security Council
- Excellency, Mr Josep Borrell, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission
- Excellencies, The G-7 Leaders
- Excellencies, The G-20 Leaders
- Excellency, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Excellency, Dr Agnes Callamard, Amnesty International
- Excellency, Mr. Ken Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch
- Excellencies, All the UN diplomatic missions in Geneva
- Excellencies, All the diplomatic missions in Addis Ababa
- Excellency, Mr. Moussa Faki, Chairperson of the African Union Commission

---

GSTS is a 501(C), and 33/2011 legally registered non-partisan, not-for-profit, and autonomous Global Knowledge Network of over 3,000 Tigray Scholars and Professionals aimed at creating Knowledge-based economy and society in Tigray, and beyond. It stands for academia, multidisciplinary and cross sectoral research and applied policy development, human capital development, fostering and advancing science, technology, and innovation, technology and knowledge transfer, youth and gender development, migration and displacement, and other educational and development related endeavors. It also works in educational advocacy and collaborates with various stakeholders towards promoting peace, good governance, human rights, and humanitarian activities.