



August 10, 2021

For Immediate Release

Re: Ethiopia's Court-Martial Decision Part of Ongoing Genocide Against Ethnic Tigrayans

Security and Justice for Tigrayans (SJT), an international advocacy group for the people of Tigray, is issuing this urgent press release to inform all concerned parties including governments, the United Nations, international human right agencies and the world at large about the Ethiopian government's decision to impose death penalty and life imprisonment against ethnic Tigrayans who served their country honorably as members of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) to defend Ethiopia, and as key members of various UN peace keeping missions. The Ethiopian government publicly announced its decision and published it in the Ethiopian Press Agency on *August 6, 2021*.

It is to be recalled that approximately 17, 000 members of the ENDF were rounded up and jailed because of their Tigrayan ethnicity prior to the government of Ethiopia launching its war on Tigray on November 4, 2020. They were unlawfully disarmed and many of them severely tortured and imprisoned. In a leaked video and verified by AP a senior military official with a rank of a General said, "We had to clean out our insides. {...} Even if there may be good people among them (Tigrayans), we can't differentiate between the good and the bad. To save the country we made it, so they were excluded from doing work."

SJT believes that capital punishment is the most severe and irreversible form of penalty that should be reserved only to those who are culpable and have committed the worst crimes. However, Prime Minister Abiy's Government is using the court-martial as an answer to cries of vengeance by applying subjective standards against innocent citizens that have become victims of political and biased court-martial judicial proceedings with no regard to their legal and human rights. As such there is no doubt that these innocent former ENDF members are now unfairly sentenced to death and life sentences just because they are Tigrayans. The military kangaroo court of Abiy Ahmed has no legal basis to persecute these individuals and impose death sentences and life imprisonment.

In addition to the above gross human rights abuses, the world must also be made aware that there is an ongoing barbaric Massacre in Humera which so far has claimed hundreds of lives. Dead bodies of Tigrayans have been collected at the border with Sudan reportedly killed and thrown into Tekeze River with their hands tied up with electrical cords by Ethiopian government forces.



Recently, the Somali regional government under the direct order of Abiy has incarcerated over 1200 Tigrayans in the Somali regional state. These are Tigrayan civilians who have been living in the towns for decades. The Somali region's attorney general recently acknowledged that they were put to prison because they support the Tigray Government without any evidence. Credible sources are also reporting that over 300 graves have been dug in the Somali region as the regional government plans to execute the prisoners and bury their remains. This act of madness, cruelty and barbarism must stop.

It is about time that the world recognizes the atrocious nature of the regime in Ethiopia and initiate a forcible measure to save the lives of these innocent Tigrayans who served their country honorably and loyally, as members of the ENDF. SJT strongly believes that such fascistic measures will only lead Ethiopia on a darker path which will result in its total disintegration. The world should not tolerate such destructive measures and must act immediately to stop these atrocities and gross human rights violations.

SJT calls for all concerned parties including governments, human right agencies, the UN, and the world community to demand the government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to:

1. Reverses its unjust life imprisonment and death sentence decisions against Ethiopian soldiers of Tigrayan origin
2. Immediately release from jail the approximately 17,000 soldiers of Tigrayan origin who are in jail
3. Allow international human rights agencies such as the ICRC, UNHCR, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to visit the prisoners jailed because of their ethnicity
4. Stop the indiscriminate imprisonment, harassment, and extra judicial killings of civilians of Tigray origin.
5. Force the Ethiopian government to allow independent investigation for crimes committed to hold all responsible perpetrators accountable
6. Impose economic sanctions and arms embargo on Ethiopian and Eritrean government until they opt for a peaceful political settlement.