



Official Correspondence GSTS-O.C-2021-048
The Global Society of Tigray Scholars
and Professionals (GSTS)

HE Mr David Muldrow Beasley
Executive Director of the World Food Programme
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**Urgent Call to the Impartiality and Transparency in the Work of the United Nations
World Food Programme (WFP) in the War-affected People of Tigray**

Excellency,

1. The Global Society of Tigray Scholars and Professionals (GSTS)ⁱ highly appreciates WFP's role in providing food assistance to avert famine, as is the case in Tigray. For the last six months, a significant portion of Tigray's population has been denied access to food, medicines, fuel, banking and other essential supplies and life-sustaining commodities. GSTS is cognizant of the challenges inherent to delivering humanitarian assistance in the conflict zones. However, the aid distribution mechanism currently in place is not up to the standards of the WFP.

2. It is with surprise and sadness that GSTS has learnt that storage and food distribution is being "facilitated" from locations run by the very government that created the disaster. Next to Asmara of Eritrea, Gondar is the second command centre of the invading forces occupying various parts of Tigray and displacing millions who are now in need of urgent humanitarian aid.

3. GSTS is forced express its concern regarding the lack of transparency and impartiality in the United Nations World Food Programme's (WFP) humanitarian food aid management in the war-affected Tigray.

4. It must be emphasized that one of the main actors that triggered and is perpetuating the humanitarian crisis in Tigray is the Amhara Regional Government aided by its militias. Moreover, the Amhara regional government is at the centre of the genocidal war, perpetuating ethnic cleansing, deliberate starvation, rape and sexual violence and all forms of destruction and heinous atrocities committed in Tigray.

5. Another source of dismay is WFP's reluctance to pronounce itself on the state of famine in Tigray based on the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence. Speaking to Aljazeera, the WFP spokesman, Mr. Peter Smerdon, said, "The issue of hunger is politically sensitive." GSTS is deeply disheartened by and concerned about WFP's statement which prioritizes political correctness over the lives of millions of civilians facing famine. Such acts do not only cover up the scale of the famine on the ground but also puts the organization's global integrity at a stake.



6. GSTS would kindly demand the WFP to:
 - a. Be transparent and announce the true scale of the famine and number of starvation deaths in Tigray;
 - b. Relocate food aid storage and distribution sites from the Amhara Region (Gondar) to the affected region of Tigray;
 - c. Revamp the food aid delivery mechanism to include airdrops and other distribution channels;
 - d. Establish rapid, unconditional, unfettered, and sustained delivery of food aid and items essential for survival, including opening a "lifeline humanitarian corridor" from Sudan to Tigray under a de-militarised route designated for safe passage of humanitarian supplies.



Sincerely,
The Global Society of Tigray Scholars
and Professionals (GSTS)
9th June 2021

CC:

- Excellency, 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
- Excellency, Mr. Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN)
New York, NY
- Excellencies, Members of the Security Council
- Excellency, Mr. Michael Fakhri
Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

ⁱ 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.