

Written Submission for the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (SDIR) Meeting on Current Situation in Northern Ethiopia War

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Recommendations

- Canada should pressure the Government of Ethiopia to release all political prisoners, including more than 13,000 Amhara journalists, opposition figures, youth activists and veterans who were jailed in the mass crackdown, which intensified in May 2022.
- Canada should center accountability and transitional justice on atrocities committed during the span of the war in Northern Ethiopia, including the November 2020 Mai-Kadra massacre and the extermination of ethnic Amharas in Welkait.
- Canada should pressure the Ethiopian Government to respond to the long-standing demand of Ethiopians to change the current ethnic apartheid constitution that causes conflicts and ethnic division in the country.
- Canada should promote inclusion of independent Amhara representation into ongoing peace talks and future negotiations and/or dialogue processes to resolve the war in Northern Ethiopia.
- The House of Commons should conduct an inquiry into atrocity crimes committed against Amhara and Afari civilians in Amhara, Afar and Oromia Regions and the extent to which they constitute genocide. This should be accompanied by a push for independent investigations into the Amhara Genocide which predated the war in Northern Ethiopia and spans various geographical regions in Ethiopia.¹

Abbreviations

- **ENDF = Ethiopian National Defense Force**
- **OLF = Oromo Liberation Front**
- **OLA = Oromo Liberation Army – armed wing of the OLF (also dubbed OLF Shene)**
- **OPDO/OPP = Oromo People’s Democratic Organization or Oromo Prosperity Party – dominant party in ruling coalition (2018-present)**
- **PP = Prosperity Party**
- **TPLF = Tigray People’s Liberation Front; self-identified as the Tigray Defense Force since outbreak of war in November 2020**

¹¹¹ Wikipedia article on “Amhara Genocide”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amhara_genocide

Background

1. In 1991, the TPLF entered Addis Ababa and took control of the Ethiopian government. In 1995, the TPLF and its partner organization the OLF instituted a new constitution which expanded the borders of the Tigray Province, forcibly incorporating lands from neighboring Gonder and Wollo Provinces (present-day Amhara Region) and formed the Tigray Regional State.² During the annexation, TPLF committed a campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide against indigenous Amhara residents in these areas who resisted the occupation for decades.³ According to recent research from Gonder University an estimated 59,000 Amharas were killed in TPLF's concentration camps.⁴ The TPLF which in its 1976 manifesto branded Amhara people "eternal enemies" of the Tigrayan people, used the new constitution to also minoritize Amharas in other parts of the country, creating regional states loosely based on ethnolinguistic identities.⁵ The TPLF dominated the ruling coalition government of Ethiopia between 1991 to 2018 but was accused of widespread crimes against the Ethiopian people.⁶
2. In 2018 Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali and his OPP/OPDO came to power in Ethiopia following popular protests in the Amhara and Oromia Regions of Ethiopia against oppression by the TPLF coalition government. The TPLF retreated to Tigray Region taking with it the bulk of the country's military hardware and began administering the region from its capital city of Mekelle. Prime Minister Abiy then moved to make peace with neighboring Eritrea, invited the OLF back to Ethiopia from exile, formed a new coalition government called the Prosperity Party excluding TPLF and was credited with opening the political space but various conspiracies and violent episodes erupted throughout the country undermining his reputation as a supposed reformist leader^{7,8,9}. The OLF's military wing, the OLA, initiated large-scale massacres of ethnic Amhara civilians in the Oromia Region in 2019 (though there were also large-scale massacres by the OLF in the 1990s).
3. In the months and years that followed, tensions and escalation occurred between the ruling party of Ethiopia and the TPLF (functioning as the Tigray Regional Government). Throughout this period tensions mounted with both sides engaging in military parades and postering until the TPLF defiantly held regional elections in mid-2020 which it won with a margin of over 99%.

² Horn Africa Insight: Welkait, Ethiopia: Geo Strategic importance and the consequential annexation by TPLF (August 9, 2021)

<https://www.hornafricainsight.org/post/welkait-ethiopia-geo-strategic-importance-and-the-consequential-annexation-by-tplf>

³ Ethiopia Insight: The Rayan people want an end to rule by Tigray (February 22, 2019)

<https://www.ethiopia-insight.com/2019/02/22/the-ryan-people-want-an-end-to-rule-by-tigray/>

⁴ Borkena: Wolkait Mass grave: Researchers say TPLF had killed and tortured about 59,000 people

<https://borkena.com/2022/04/05/wolkait-mass-grave-researchers-say-tplf-had-killed-and-tortured-about-59000-people/>

⁵ Eurasia Review: Victims and Victimization in Ethiopian Politics: Targeting the Amhara on Three Fronts – OpEd (April 13, 2022)

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/13042022-victims-and-victimization-in-ethiopian-politics-targeting-the-amhara-on-three-fronts-oped/>

⁶ Human Rights Watch: Ethiopia Events of 2005

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2006/country-chapters/ethiopia>

⁷ Human Rights Watch: Ethiopia: Justice Needed for Deadly October Violence (April 1, 2020)

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/01/ethiopia-justice-needed-deadly-october-violence>

⁸ Reuters: At least 23 die in weekend of Ethiopia ethnic violence (September 17, 2018)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-violence-idUSKCN1LX0VK>

⁹ BBC: Ethiopia's missing students: Families' pain and the unsolved mystery (March 16, 2020)

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51411720>

4. The war in Northern Ethiopia broke out on November 4th, 2020, when the TPLF launched a series of attacks against the ENDF Northern Command which it deemed a “pre-emptive strike” and commenced a full-fledged invasion into the Amhara Region.¹⁰¹¹ This prompted a fierce response from the ENDF and allied Amhara and Afar Regional Forces. Days after the TPLF’s attack on the ENDF Northern Command, on November 6th, 2020, Sudanese forces launched an invasion into western Ethiopia to fulfill irredentist claims over disputed territories.¹²¹³ During this period, the TPLF also launched missiles into various cities in Eritrea and Amhara Region.¹⁴¹⁵¹⁶ This led to Eritrean forces entering into the conflict though both the Ethiopian or Eritrean Governments denied involvement until months later. On November 9th, 2020, the TPLF militias and supporters massacred over 1,700 Amhara civilians in Mai-Kadra town, the single worst atrocity and civilian massacre of the war in Northern Ethiopia.¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹²⁰²¹²²
5. Following intense fighting, allied Ethiopian forces repelled the TPLF’s invasion and by the end of November 2020 took effective control of Tigray Region. This control persisted until late June 2021 when allied forces initiated a complete withdrawal from Tigray Region which the PP cited was to allow for humanitarian delivery into Tigray.

¹⁰ TPLF spokesman Sekutere Getachew admits TPLF started the war (November 2020)

<https://youtu.be/8klxlhhvddl>

¹¹ Medium: The Northern Command Attacks and the Crime of Genocide – Part One (November 3, 2021)

<https://medium.com/@jemalcountess/the-northern-command-attacks-and-the-crime-of-genocide-part-one-8988706f4b9c>

¹² Facebook Post from @GPEthiopia (May 28, 2021)

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=255601513022594&id=102511694998244&sfnsn=mo

¹³ Tweet from @GPEthiopia (February 13, 2021)

https://twitter.com/GPEthiopia/status/1360636250688950272?s=20&t=kD8laQQ1CZyUc6K_R570nQ

¹⁴ Reuters: Rockets fired at Eritrean capital from Ethiopia, diplomats say (November 13, 2020)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-conflict-idUSKBN27U074>

¹⁵ VOA: Rockets Hit Eritrea’s Capital, Asmara (November 15, 2020)

<https://www.voanews.com/a/africa-rockets-hit-eritreas-capital-asmara/6198391.html>

¹⁶ CBC: 2 missiles target Ethiopian airports as Tigray conflict widens (November 14, 2020)

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/ethiopia-tigray-conflict-airports-1.5802293>

¹⁷ Tweet from @amora_ethiopia: TPLF Leader Debretsion Gebremichael appears on Tigray Regional TV on November 14, 2020 admitting victims of the Mai-Kadra massacre were ethnic Amharas and blaming the Ethiopian Government

https://twitter.com/amora_ethiopia/status/1458114164942049284?s=20&t=LUmUj-oHHPjwxP_HFWgSIg

¹⁸ Amhara Association of America (AAA) report on the Mai-Kadra massacre (November 2021)

<https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/commemorating-the-two-year-anniversary-of-the-mai-kadra-massacre>

¹⁹ Amnesty International Preliminary Report on Mai-Kadra massacre (November 12, 2020)

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/11/ethiopia-investigation-reveals-evidence-that-scores-of-civilians-were-killed-in-massacre-in-tigray-state/>

²⁰ Ethiopian Human Rights Council Preliminary Investigation Report on Mai-Kadra Massacre (December 25, 2020)

<https://ehrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/EHRCO-Preliminary-Investigation-Report-on-Major-Human-Rights-Violations-in-and-around-Maikadra-1.pdf>

²¹ Washington Post: 600 civilians were killed in massacre in Tigray, Ethiopia’s rights commission says (November 24, 2020)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/ethiopia-tigray-mai-kadra-massacre/2020/11/24/2fcb4218-2e76-11eb-9dd6-2d0179981719_story.html

²² Getty Images: Mai Kadra Attack Survivor Allege Premeditated Ethnic Cleansing (March 5, 2021)

<https://www.gettyimages.ca/photos/jemal-countess?editorialproducts=news&events=775631497&family=editorial&phrase=Jemal%20Countess&sort=newest#license>

6. Following the withdrawal of ENDF from Tigray, The TPLF claimed it was a military defeat of the ENDF and vowed to “settle a score” against Amhara people²³ and launched their second full-scale invasion into Amhara and Afar Regions which lasted for months and caused widespread atrocities.²⁴ On August 11th, 2021, The TPLF formed a pact with the OLA which also expanded previous invasions into the Amhara and Afar Regions.²⁵
7. Following a fierce resistance from allied Ethiopian forces, most of the TPLF retreated to Tigray Region by December 2021. Following the third and most recent round of fighting in late August 24, 2022²⁶, TPLF was pushed out of Amhara Region and allied forces of ENDF and Amhara forces controlled 70% of Tigray Region.
8. In early November 2022, TPLF and PP refused representation of Amharas in peace talks and signed an exclusive peace agreement between the two in Pretoria. This and the follow up agreement in Nairobi are rejected by Amharas because Amharas are not represented.²⁷
9. The peace talks also excluded civil society organizations which could have promoted justice and accountability.

Atrocities Committed in Northern Ethiopia – Civilian Massacres

1. During the TPLF’s invasion and occupation of Amhara Region between late June and December 2021, they committed widespread massacres against civilians by shooting civilians, shelling

²³ TPLF commanders make a speech in front of conscripts to “settle a score” against Amhara people before the full-scale invasion of Amhara Region (July 2021)

<https://twitter.com/GPEthiopia/status/1417970388412346371?s=20&t=UOBM5ukJNU-kj1xKN0Inxg>

²⁴ U.S. Department of State: Reports of Atrocities in the Amhara Region (February 22, 2022)

<https://www.state.gov/reports-of-atrocities-in-the-amhara-region/>

²⁵ Bloomberg: New Armed alliance Challenges Ethiopia Premier as Crisis Worsens (August 11, 2021)

[bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-11/new-armed-alliance-challenges-ethiopia-premier-as-crisis-worsens](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-11/new-armed-alliance-challenges-ethiopia-premier-as-crisis-worsens)

²⁶ Reuters: Fighting erupts along border of Ethiopia’s northern Tigray region (August 24, 2022)

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/fighting-resumes-along-border-ethiopias-northern-tigray-region-resident-tigray-2022-08-24/>

²⁷ Vice News: ‘I Remember the Horrors’: Ethiopians are Sceptical of Sudden Peace Deal (November 4, 2022)

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/n7zkmk/ethiopia-tigray-peace-deal-refugees>

residential areas and causing mass displacements of towns and cities.²⁸²⁹³⁰³¹³²³³³⁴³⁵³⁶ Large-scale massacres were committed in Mai-Kadra, Chenna Tekle-Haymanot, Raya-Kobo, Alamata, Korem, Zata, Aderkay, Mai-Tebri Debre-Tabor, Hamusit, Mersa, Gashena, Dessie, Woldia, Lalibela, Kemise, Kombolcha, Hayk, Debre-Sina, Shewa-Robit, Ataye, Galicoma and more. According to the Amhara Association of America's annual report, over 3,308 Amhara civilians were killed across the country in 2021 alone.³⁷ In all of these cases, the victims were unarmed civilians (non-combatants) sometimes in metropolitan areas, other times in humble towns and villages but were targeted in shooting sprees, indiscriminate artillery shelling and other forms of killings. While the majority of killings were against civilians in Amhara Region widespread killings were also committed in Afar Region and specifically hundreds of IDPs were targeted and killed at times bombarded with chemical warfare attacks.³⁸³⁹⁴⁰

²⁸ Ethiopian Human Rights Commission – Amhara region: Redress and recovery for areas in South Gondar and North Wollo Zones affected by the conflict (November 13, 2021)

<https://ehrc.org/amhara-region-redress-and-recovery-for-areas-in-south-gondar-and-north-wollo-zones-affected-by-conflict/>

²⁹ Reuters: As government offensive pushes forward, scars of war dot Ethiopia's Amhara region (December 11, 2021)

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/government-offensive-pushes-forward-scars-war-dot-ethiopia-amhara-region-2021-12-10/>

³⁰ AP: 'Then the killing started': Witnesses accuse Tigray fighters (September 25, 2021)

https://apnews.com/article/africa-kenya-nairobi-ethiopia-7a8b7aa08db4e0710105bc36a8321298?utm_campaign=SocialFlow&utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=AP_Africa

³¹ IBT: 'It Was A War': Ethnic Killings Cloud Ethiopia's Election Buildup (June 3, 2021)

<https://www.ibtimes.com/it-was-war-ethnic-killings-cloud-ethiopia-election-buildup-3215972>

³² Channel 4: Ethiopia: Bodies litter roadside in ongoing civil war (December 20, 2021)

<https://www.channel4.com/news/ethiopia-bodies-litter-roadside-in-ongoing-civil-war>

³³ Reuters: Ethiopia government says Tigray forces killed 100 youths in Kombolcha (November 1, 2021)

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-government-says-tigray-forces-killed-100-youths-kombolcha-2021-11-01/>

³⁴ The Guardian: Rebel forces accused of killing more than 100 civilians in north Ethiopia (September 9, 2021)

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/sep/09/rebel-forces-accused-of-killing-civilians-north-ethiopia>

³⁵ The New Humanitarian: Ethiopia conflict sees hunger and atrocities spread from Tigray to Amhara (October 4, 2021)

https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2021/10/4/Ethiopia-conflict-hunger-atrocities-Tigray-Amhara?utm_campaign=social&utm_medium=social&utm_source=Twitter

³⁶ France 24: Ethiopia's Tigray conflict spreads to Amhara region (September 21, 2021)

<https://www.france24.com/en/tv-shows/focus/20210921-ethiopia-s-tigray-conflict-spreads-to-amhara-region?ref=tw>

³⁷ Amhara Association of America: AAA Annual Human Rights Report, May 2022 (May 27, 2022)

<https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/aaa-annual-human-rights-report-may-2022>

³⁸ The Defense Post: 12 Killed in Attack in Ethiopia's Afar Region: Doctor (August 10, 2021)

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2021/08/10/ethiopia-afar-region-attack/>

³⁹ Ethiopia Observer: More than 200 people were killed in refugee shelters in the Afar region (August 9, 2021)

<https://www.ethiopiaobserver.com/2021/08/09/more-than-200-people-were-killed-in-refugee-shelters-in-the-afar-region/>

⁴⁰ The Guardian: 'Before they were our brothers. Now I want revenge': Tigray conflict engulfs neighbouring state (February 28, 2022)

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/feb/28/before-they-were-our-brothers-now-i-want-revenge-tigray-conflict-engulfs-neighbouring-state>

2. TPLF forces told survivors that massacres of civilians were “revenge” following military defeats by armed forces.⁴¹ This pattern of deliberately targeting civilians demonstrated an intent to terrorize civilians as a weapon of war.
3. Over the course of the war, the OLA and allied militants also perpetrated massacres of Amhara civilians across the Oromia Region including the June 18th, 2022 massacre of over 500 civilians in Tole and over 300 in Lemlem in July 4th, 2022.^{42,43,44,45} In the year 2021 alone, an estimated 133 incidents occurred in Oromia Region resulting in at least 929 Amharas killed and 151 injured.⁴⁶

Hate Speech and incitement of ethnic-based violence and genocidal acts

4. Over the course of the war, the TPLF officers and diaspora support base regularly rallied support from ordinary Tigrayans by using hate speech, scapegoating, fear mongering and dehumanization targeting ethnic Amhara people.^{47,48}
5. TPLF top officials and leadership including Leader Debretsion Gebremichael, General Tsadkan Gebretensae, spokesman Getachew Reda and communications officer Kindeya GebreHiwot announced intent to commit genocidal acts by declaring they would “*settle a score*” before the full-scale invasion of the Amhara and Afar Regions.⁴⁹ It should be noted there were also early indicators preceding the war, and open threats that the Tigray Region would “*cut up the Amhara Region*” and forcibly incorporate more territories (alluding to territories in addition to Welkait and Raya).⁵⁰
6. In many instances, elements in the pro-TPLF diaspora have openly called for violent and/or terrorist acts on the ground in Ethiopia including for entire cities to be “destroyed”.⁵¹ In many instances, social media platforms were used by TPLF (and OLA) supporters to disseminate hate speech (e.g. ethnic slurs against Amhara people as “donkeys”), atrocity denialism and

⁴¹ Al Jazeera: ‘I await divine justice’: Rebels bring woes to Ethiopia’s Amhara (March 17, 2022)

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/3/17/ethiopia-amhara-resident-reeling-from-five-month-reb>

⁴² Amnesty International: Ethiopia: Authorities must investigate massacre of ethnic Amharas in Tole (July 21, 2022)

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/07/ethiopia-authorities-must-investigate-massacre-of-ethnic-amhara-in-tole/>

⁴³ HRW: Ethiopia: Civilians in Western Oromia Left Unprotected (August 31, 2022)

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/08/31/ethiopia-civilians-western-oromia-left-unprotected>

⁴⁴ Amhara Association of America: “It Seems Like The Whole Population Is Killed” (July 3, 2022)

<https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/june-18th-2022-amhara-massacre-in-the-tole-kebele-west-wollega-by-olf>

⁴⁵ Amhara Association of America: “They attacked us for the simple reason of being Amhara” (July 10, 2022)

<https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/they-attacked-us-for-the-simple-reason-of-being-amhara>

⁴⁶ Amhara Association of America: AAA Annual Human Rights Report, May 2022 (May 27, 2022)

<https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/aaa-annual-human-rights-report-may-2022>

⁴⁷ Tweet from @GPEthiopia (July 21, 2021)

<https://twitter.com/GPEthiopia/status/1417970388412346371?s=20&t=F40YSb2xZL3YGMrXHL22Qw>

⁴⁸ A prominent Tigrayan singer Yeshi Berhane leads pro-genocidal chants in diaspora rally (March 5, 2021)

<https://youtu.be/HO-gjvnmYOI>

⁴⁹ Interview with TPLF Spokesman Getachew Reda (2021)

<https://youtu.be/ekk7-8208Yc>

⁵⁰ Tweet from @TheDejazmach: Captioned clip from TPLF spokesman Mehari Yohannes from December 2018 (December 28, 2021)

https://twitter.com/TheDejazmach/status/1475831504571879434?s=20&t=enAjQDsqqObAzHGyMnj_cw

⁵¹ Tweet from @engineerdagi (March 6, 2021)

<https://twitter.com/engineerdagi/status/1368183106826625025?s=20&t=F40YSb2xZL3YGMrXHL22Qw>

incitement of genocidal acts.⁵²⁵³⁵⁴⁵⁵ In many cases, non-Ethiopian scholars and academics aligned to the TPLF would engage in similar hate speech against ethnic Amharas and Ethiopians. See example of footage recorded of Dr. Mukesh Kapila saying “*Ethiopians are horrible people*” among other hateful and racist remarks.⁵⁶

Weaponized Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

7. During their occupation of Amhara Region, TPLF forces perpetrated weaponized rape, routinely perpetrating gang rape, physical assaults, dehumanization and torture against women and young girls.⁵⁷⁵⁸⁵⁹⁶⁰ Rape victims recalled TPLF fighters referring to Amhara people as ‘*donkeys*’, ‘*greedy Amharas*’. Testimonies also reveal TPLF fighters looted property from rape victims. Victims in many instances were underage and reports implicated TPLF forces of gang-raping children.⁶¹ Assaultants in some cases forcibly inserted foreign objects into their victims’ genitalia causing lacerations, infection and other effects. Young IDPs interviewed in Debre Birhan camp reported seeing “*their mothers raped and their fathers slaughtered by TPLF forces*”.⁶²
8. TPLF forces also perpetrated sexual violence against women and young girls in Afar Region with many of the victims being vulnerable IDPs, civilians in shelters.⁶³

⁵² Tweet from @amharaye (September 2, 2022)

<https://twitter.com/amharaye/status/1565880827044585472?s=20&t=F40YSb2xZL3YGMrXHL22Qw>

⁵³ GP Ethiopia: Sowing Hate & Discord In The Name of Human Rights Movements (March 8, 2021)

<https://gpethiopia.medium.com/sowing-hate-discord-in-the-name-of-humanitarian-rights-movements-77ad2ee89b4>

⁵⁴ Tweet from @charla120 (September 30, 2022)

<https://twitter.com/charla120/status/1575887790549639168?s=20&t=F40YSb2xZL3YGMrXHL22Qw>

⁵⁵ Tweet from @CaptionEthio (July 20, 2022)

https://twitter.com/CaptionEthio/status/1549674164172103680?s=20&t=enAjQDsqqObAzHGyMnj_cw

⁵⁶ Tweet from @xotrinx (November 27, 2021)

https://twitter.com/xotrinx/status/1464799674351734785?s=20&t=enAjQDsqqObAzHGyMnj_cw

⁵⁷ Amnesty International: Ethiopia: Survivors of TPLF attack in Amhara describe gang rape, looting and physical assaults (November 9, 2021)

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/11/ethiopia-survivors-of-tplf-attack-in-amhara-describe-gang-rape-looting-and-physical-assaults/>

⁵⁸ Amnesty International: Ethiopia: Summary killings, rape and looting by Tigrayan forces in Amhara (February 16, 2022)

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr25/5218/2022/en/>

⁵⁹ Channel 4: Ethiopia’s Tigray crisis: Survivors share stories of sexual violence carried out by fighters (January 27, 2022)

<https://www.channel4.com/news/ethiopias-tigray-crisis-survivors-share-stories-of-sexual-violence-carried-out-by-fighters>

⁶⁰ Amhara Association of America: Special Report: Sexual and Gender Based Violence in North and South Gonder Zones of Amhara Region by Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) militias

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PXZcTWOeVazbE3nfV3SUGaxvIcDHA3A0/view>

⁶¹ CNN: Amnesty International accuses Tigrayan rebel fighters of gang-raping children in Ethiopia (February 15, 2022)

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/02/15/africa/amnesty-ethiopia-tigray-report-intl/index.html>

⁶² Rabble: TPLF responsible for the loss of a generation in Ethiopia (November 1, 2022)

<https://rabble.ca/human-rights/tplf-responsible-for-the-loss-of-a-generation-in-ethiopia/>

⁶³ Relief Web: Reporting Sexual Violence Monthly News Brief – January 2022 (January 31, 2022)

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/reporting-sexual-violence-monthly-news-brief-january-2022>

9. Victims were left with lasting physical and psychological trauma reporting unwanted pregnancy, pain, anxiety, depression and sexually transmitted infections including HIV. Many have also felt social implications of their ordeal facing ostracization.⁶⁴

Impact of War on Internal Displacement and Humanitarian Crisis

1. According to UN OCHA's humanitarian update on June 27, 2022, of the 13 million people in need of food assistance, the greatest need was in Amhara Region at 7.4 million. Of these, 300,000 IDPs from Oromia Region were in protracted displacement in North Shewa Zone.⁶⁵ Over 500,000 people were also displaced from parts of western Oromia Region following the June 18, 2022 Tole massacre.
2. In October 2021, an estimated 4.5 million Amhara were under blockade and siege b TPLF had no access to telecommunications, electricity, banking or humanitarian services.⁶⁶

Destruction of Civilian Infrastructure

1. The invading TPLF and OLA forces perpetrated a campaign of deliberate destruction of critical civilian infrastructure, looting of materials and in the case of TPLF, transported looted materials back to Tigray Region.⁶⁷ Invading forces targeted private and public institutions dismantling hospitals, schools, administrative offices, sites of worship, heritage sites, businesses and residential homes. Periods of razing targeting civilians also followed massacres.⁶⁸ Damages to property in Amhara Region alone are estimated in the billions of dollars.⁶⁹
2. Widespread damages were incurred to the local health system with international health organizations accused of ignoring destruction in Amhara and Afar Regions.⁷⁰

Mass Arrests of Amhara Dissidents and Peaceful Protesters

⁶⁴ VOA: VOA Speaks to 14 Women Raped During TPLF Occupation of Ethiopia's Amhara Region (May 23, 2022) <https://www.voanews.com/a/voa-speaks-to-14-women-raped-during-tplf-occupation-of-ethiopia-s-amhara-region-6585451.html>

⁶⁵ UNOCHA Humanitarian Update via Twitter @AAA_Amhara (June 27, 2022)

https://twitter.com/AAA_Amhara/status/1543953885412327424?s=20&t=uXOdKOvVGu_hfRDVA8fQpg

⁶⁶ Fox News: Rep Sherman calls for naval forces in Ethiopian conflict, US diaspora frustrated by messaging (October 23, 2021)

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/rep-sherman-ethiopian-conflict-naval-forces-us-diaspora-frustrated>

⁶⁷ DW News: Ethiopia's Amhara region shattered after weeks of war December 17, 2021)

<https://www.dw.com/en/ethiopias-amhara-region-shattered-after-weeks-of-war/a-60145364?maca=en-Twitter-sharing>

⁶⁸ The Telegraph: 'They are out for revenge': Evidence of war crimes as rebels roar out of Ethiopia's Tigray region (August 17, 2021)

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2021/08/17/revenge-evidence-war-crimes-rebels-roar-ethiopias-tigray-region/>

⁶⁹ Foreign Policy: Don't Blame Amharas for Ethiopia's War (February 4, 2022)

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/02/04/amhara-tigray-tplf-abiy-ethiopia-war/>

⁷⁰ The Lancet: WHO's surveillance system for attacks on health care is failing Ethiopia (March 26, 2022)

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(22\)00337-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(22)00337-3/fulltext)

3. In May 2022, the PP initiated a campaign of mass arrests dubbed “law enforcement operation” targeting Amhara journalists, opposition figures, youth activists and veterans.⁷¹⁷²⁷³⁷⁴⁷⁵ Political prisoners including journalists were arbitrarily held in remote detention centers.⁷⁶⁷⁷ In several cases, journalists faced intimidation from army officials, such as in the case of journalist Temesgen Dessalegn.⁷⁸⁷⁹⁸⁰ In another case, elderly journalist and historian, Mr. Tadios Tantu was arrested for criticizing the ruling party.⁸¹
4. Widespread protests in Amhara Region broke out on several occasions including after a severe wave of genocidal massacres of Amhara civilians in Oromia Region in 2021.⁸² When protests happened again in 2022, security forces used lethal measures, torture and other tactics resulting

⁷¹ Reuters: Ethiopian regional authority arrests four staff members of media group (May 22, 2022)

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopias-amhara-region-authorities-arrest-four-staff-members-media-group-2022-05-22/>

⁷² CFWIJ: Ethiopia: Meaza Mohammed – Third Woman Journalist Detained AS Authorities Crackdown on “Illegal Activity” (May 30, 2022)

<https://www.womeninjournalism.org/threats-all/ethiopia-meaza-mohammed-second-woman-journalist-detained-as-authorities-crackdown-against-alleged-illegal-activity>

⁷³ The National Press Club: Statement urging release of wrongfully detained journalists (June 3, 2022)

<https://www.press.org/newsroom/national-press-club-statement-urging-release-wrongfully-detained-journalists#.YppD5FyDOdo.twitter>

⁷⁴ Reuters: Journalists, general, militiamen arrested in Ethiopia’s Amhara (May 20, 2022)

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/wife-says-ethiopian-general-arrested-after-criticising-government-2022-05-20/>

⁷⁵ The Africa Report: Ethiopia: Rising resentment against ruling Prosperity Party in Amhara (August 18, 2022)

<https://www.theafricareport.com/233103/ethiopia-rising-resentment-against-ruling-prosperity-party-in-amhara/>

⁷⁶ VOA: Ethiopia Holding Journalists in Detention Centers Without Charge (June 7, 2022)

<https://www.voanews.com/a/ethiopia-holding-journalists-in-detention-centers-without-charge/6606676.html>

⁷⁷ Tweet from @AAA_Amhara (June 11, 2022)

https://twitter.com/AAA_Amhara/status/1535702528070930446?s=20&t=enAjQDsqqObAzHGyMnj_cw

⁷⁸ Tweet from @AAA_Amhara (July 2019)

https://twitter.com/AAA_Amhara/status/1550629159319339008?s=20&t=enAjQDsqqObAzHGyMnj_cw

⁷⁹ Reporters sans frontières (RSF) on arrest of Temesgen Desalegn (July 13, 2022)

https://twitter.com/RSF_inter/status/1547215939351052288?s=20&t=enAjQDsqqObAzHGyMnj_cw

⁸⁰ CPJ: Ethiopian journalist Temesgen Desalegn denied bail, ordered to remain in detention (August 1, 2022)

<https://cpi.org/2022/08/ethiopian-journalist-temesgen-desalegn-denied-bail-ordered-to-remain-in-detention/>

⁸¹ Tweet from @GPEthiopia (July 15, 2022)

https://twitter.com/GPEthiopia/status/1548057746431299587?s=20&t=enAjQDsqqObAzHGyMnj_cw

⁸² Addis Standard: Protests happening in multiple cities in Amhara region denouncing reports of targeted attacks against Amhara community (April 20, 2021)

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/6/massacre-of-hundreds-fuels-protests-resentment-in-ethiopia>

in deaths of civilians and peaceful demonstrators.⁸³ Use of lethal force extended to students who also demonstrated across university campuses late June and early July 2022.^{84,85,86}

Conclusion

In conclusion, throughout the devastating war in Northern Ethiopia which has raged on for over 2 years, it is clear millions of civilians were impacted across the Amhara, Afar and Tigray Regions. However the majority of those affected hail from the Amhara Region. Recent news of a cessation of hostilities agreement reached between the PP and TPLF while positive in principle, arose from a flawed process which was exclusionary and non-transparent. The exclusion of Amharas was certainly one of the most glaring mistakes which undermined the premise of promoting transitional justice and accountability. A bilateral agreement in a multilateral war, rather can only be expected to bring up an outcome in which PP and TPLF push for mutual immunity from crimes. This sets a dangerous precedent for violent armed groups throughout Ethiopia which will be incentivized to commit atrocities against civilians for political leverage such as in the case of the OLA. Secondly, even if the war in Northern Ethiopia subsides it will not resolve violence which predated the war including ongoing ethnic-based massacres in the Oromia Region and elsewhere in the country. And lastly, the failure to consider amending the federal constitution fails to address the structural causes of war and violence in Ethiopia for a band-aid solution which will not bring lasting peace and stability and will effectively prolong pain and suffering for millions of Ethiopians and people abroad.

⁸³ Amhara Association of America: Report on Prosperity Party's mass arrest campaign and use of lethal force against peaceful protesters by security force in May 2022

https://www.amharaamerica.org/files/ugd/e494ca_2b63fef35a04485780f0168a2beb9c49.pdf

⁸⁴ Amhara Association of America: Update on Student Protests across Addis Ababa and Amhara Region against Amhara Genocide (July 9, 2022)

<https://www.amharaamerica.org/post/student-protests-against-ongoing-amhara-genocide>

⁸⁵ Associated Press: Ethiopia's mass arrests show rift with former Amhara allies (June 3, 2022)

https://apnews.com/article/politics-kenya-africa-ethiopia-arrests-324b72c41ce1d991db8ff222e8469887?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=AP_Africa&utm_campaign=SocialFlow

⁸⁶ Al Jazeera: 'Death Sentence': Massacres fuel protests, resentment in Ethiopia (July 6, 2022)

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/6/massacre-of-hundreds-fuels-protests-resentment-in-ethiopia>