

## Press Release on Continued Disinformation Campaign against Ethiopia

November 2, 2020

**Vision Ethiopia**, a non-partisan association of Ethiopian scholars and professionals, expresses its unequivocal disapprobation of the recent disinformation campaign waged against the interest of the people of Ethiopia by the Western media, certain humanitarian organizations, and some branches of the US government and the European Union.

While we fully appreciate the engagement of the United States and other organizations to work with the Ethiopian government to achieve a peaceful solution to the crises in the Tigray region and to conduct untarnished investigation into any reports of human rights violations, we are deeply concerned by the lack of balance and objectivity in the reporting of the facts on the ground. A case in point is the recent [statement issued by the US State Department](#) [1] that levels unfounded and unsubstantiated allegations, singling out the Amhara people as perpetrators and invaders, in a blatant violation of the sovereignty of the country.

We believe that it is inopportune and a travesty of justice for the US State Department to put blame on the same people whose suffering has been completely unheeded by successive US administrations, the international community, the Western media and human rights institutions.

As fully documented in our earlier communications, the Amhara people and other members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church have been victims of [genocidal violence](#) [2], committed by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and its terrorist allies, in various parts of the country, including the Amhara ancestral lands of Wolkait, Tegede and Raya, which had been illegally and forcibly annexed by the TPLF.

As recently as the early days of November 2020, following the treasonous attack by the TPLF on the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), over one thousand innocent civilians, preponderantly Amharas, were massacred by TPLF

cadres in the small town of Mai-Kadra alone [3]. The murderers, after committing the heinous crimes, not only managed to escape to the neighboring country of the Sudan as refugees, but are also now used as the primary source of all the misinformation campaign that the remnants of the TPLF regime are methodically fanning and feeding to the Western media and sympathetic governments. Ironically, the recent [Amnesty international report](#) [4], which was alluded to in the US State Department statement and cited by the mainstream media, was mostly based on the accounts and testimonials of these criminals.

Equally troubling is the lack of balance in the coverage of the crisis in Tigray, whose root cause is the brazen and unprovoked attack by the TPLF on the ENDF. It is extremely disheartening and alarming to behold how major newspapers, humanitarian organizations and even the US State Department, conveniently and conspicuously omit this crucial fact in their analysis of the current situation in the region. For example, in its issue of February 26, 2021, the *New York Times* unashamedly asserted that the government of Ethiopia “launched a surprise military offensive,” going to the extent of contradicting the statement issued by a TPLF spokesperson who had bragged about the lightning preemptive attack they carried out against the ENDF. The *New York Times* has yet to retract its erroneous reports or regret its misleading accounts!

The TPLF, having lost the unwinnable war that it had started, has predictably embarked on a major public relation offensive, thanks to the enormous amount of aid money the criminal organization had embezzled while in power. TPLF operators, some of whom are prominently planted in international organizations, humanitarian institutions and major news outlets, are using traditional and social media forums in a coordinated fashion to disseminate their disinformation and lies.

Tragically, the TPLF operatives have so far been successful in befuddling the international community, as well as sympathetic governments and institutions, as they had effectively done so for over three decades of their tyrannical rule. The people of Ethiopia are confident that history will judge those Western media, governments and institutions who stood on the side of a terrorist group that has inflicted immeasurable

suffering and committed horrendous atrocities and crimes with impunity against innocent and defenseless civilians.

Manifestly, the spiteful tactics pursued by the criminal TPLF organization include:

- *Playing victim.* They have deplorably used the atrocities they had committed on the Amhara people, as if they were the victims themselves.
- *False impersonation and [misattribution](#)* [5]. They present criminals as eyewitnesses or victims of crimes, and re-enact fabricated acts of atrocities. In one such fabricated story, a TPLF operative who actually resides in Boston was videotaped pretending to be a [priest in Axum](#) [6].
- *Regionalizing the crisis.* The TPLF is raising arms and conspiring with neighboring countries to wage war against Ethiopia. In other cases, the TPLF flagrantly provoked neighboring countries, such as Eritrea, with missile attacks to draw them into the conflict.
- *Engaging high-profile lobbyists and freelance reporters.* The TPLF operatives have effectively used the billions of dollars their leaders stashed away in foreign bank accounts to hire high-profile PR firms for the sole purpose of advancing their agenda of disinformation and influencing policy in the West
- *Creating chaos, disruption and unrest in the Tigray region and the rest of the country.* The TPLF agents have methodically destroyed infrastructure, committed heinous crimes in the region, and inflicted hardship on the people of Tigray for the objective of swaying public opinion against the law enforcement campaign waged by the government,

Thus far, their wicked tactics and strategies appear to bear fruits, as evidenced by the recent reports of the US State Department, Amnesty International and major media outlets.

We are deeply concerned that uncritical support given to this criminal group by the US State Department and other organizations and institutions will further embolden the group to continue to execute nefarious activities, disrupt the peace in the region, and subject our compatriots in Tigray and the rest of the country to more suffering, violence and bloodshed.

We, therefore, urge the US government and the international community to exercise prudence and not fall to the ploys of the TPLF that has hoodwinked the West for over three decades, while committing atrocious crimes against the people of Ethiopia.

We also call upon editors of all major media institutions to uphold minimally acceptable journalistic standards, and discharge their responsibilities to issue responsible, unbiased, fact-based and untarnished reports.

Board of Directors of Vision Ethiopia

## References

- [1] <https://www.state.gov/atrocities-in-ethiopias-tigray-region/>
- [2] <https://borkena.com/2020/08/12/genocide-is-alive-and-well-in-africa/>
- [3] <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/12/survivors-recount-horrific-details-of-mai-kadra-massacre>
- [4] <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/02/ethiopia-eritrean-troops-massacre-of-hundreds-of-axum-civilians-may-among-crime-against-humanity/>
- [5] <https://gpethiopia.medium.com/concerning-misuse-abuse-and-deliberate-misattribution-of-evidences-of-crimes-against-humanity-in-3c06a0b4c771>
- [6] <https://www.bbc.com/amharic/news-56249153>