

Statement of Worldwide Ethiopian Civic Associations on Government Transparency and Accountability

January 15, 2022

The series of high-handed, inexplicable and confounding measures taken by the central government since the November 2020 treasonous attack by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) on the Northern Command of the National Defense Forces has justifiably led to popular resentment and disillusionment. Owing to these measures, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government has lost the modicum of trust and credibility it might have received, including from the Diaspora community, following the recent national elections.

At a time when the country is under attack by internal terrorist forces and foreign enemies, the Federal Government and the ruling party continue to take momentous decisions in secrecy. This has understandably led many sections of the country and in the Diaspora to question the rationale and true motives of the Government in making consequential decisions following the TPLF's attack on the Northern Command.

First, the dramatic declaration of a unilateral ceasefire on June 28, 2021, has led to the unimaginably brutal devastation of the Amhara and Afar regions, with incalculable damage to life and property, as well as to the perpetration of atrocious sexual violence against women of all ages.

This was followed by the December 23rd, 2021, decision not to pursue the retreating criminal forces of the TPLF, thereby allowing the terrorist organization breathing time and space to regroup and launch renewed aggression against the beleaguered Amhara and Afar regions.

And, to add insult to injury, on January 7, 2022, the Government declared amnesty for some of the most notorious leaders of the TPLF and other extremist forces. The justifications offered in support of the decision are palpably dubious, incomprehensible, inconsistent, and legally questionable.

Predictably, many Ethiopians are now concerned, and even convinced, that the above sequence of events is but a harbinger of something even more sinister in the offing. The Government has repeatedly shown its proclivity to take actions that undermine national unity and popular confidence and trust.

As the country is going through a most trying period in its long history, therefore, now is the time for the people of Ethiopia, at home and abroad, to stay united and to boldly demand that their government be fully transparent and accountable.

Accordingly, we call upon all Ethiopian citizens and people of Ethiopian descent in the Diaspora to demand that the government:

1. Rescind its recent amnesty for criminal leaders of terrorist groups, and resolutely eliminate, once and for all, further threats from the TPLF and other terrorist groups;
2. Desist from taking any further actions to appease terrorist groups and foreign powers at the expense of the national interest, including any action that may affect the rights of the inhabitants of Wolkait, Tsegede, Tselemt and Raya that have been forcibly annexed by the TPLF; and
3. Acknowledge past mistakes and pledge to uphold the highest standards of transparency, fairness, and trustworthiness. In particular, the government should ensure that the Amhara and Afar regions are not subjected to another round of devastating aggression.

In closing, we would like to affirm to the people of Ethiopia our determination to closely follow developments back home and to respond accordingly.

Signatories:

1. Adwa Great African Victory Association (AGAVA)
2. Amhara Heritage Society of Minnesota (AHSM)
3. Association of Concerned Ethiopians in the Diaspora (ACED)
4. Association of Former Army Officers (AFAO)
5. Consortium of Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations (TIBIBIR)
6. Ethiopian Dialogue Forum (EDF)
7. Ethiopian American Development Council (EADC)
8. Ethiopian Veterans Association (EVA)
9. Ethiopiawinnet - Council for the Defense of Citizen Rights (E-CDCR)
10. Global Alliance for the Right of Ethiopians (GARE)
11. Global Alliance for Justice – The Ethiopian Cause (GAJEC)
12. Global Amhara Coalition (GAC)
13. Major Lemma Woldetsadik Memorial Foundation
14. Menelik Hall Foundation (MHF)
15. Network of Ethiopian Scholars (NES)
16. Radio Yenesew Ethiopia

- 17.Selassie Stand Up, Inc.
- 18.The Ethiopian Broadcast Group
- 19.Vision Ethiopia (VE)
- 20.Worldwide Ethiopian Civic Associations Network (WE-CAN)
- 21.Yeamara Hizb Sirchit

cc:

- H.E. Woizero Sahle-Work Zewde, President, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- H.E. Ato Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
- The Honorable Tagesse Chafo, Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives
- The Honorable Ato Agegnehu Teshager, Speaker of the House of the Federation
- H.E. Woizero Meaza Ashenafi, President of the Federal Supreme Court of Ethiopia
- H.E. Dr. Gedion Timotheos, Minister of Justice
- The Honorable Ato Awol Arba, President of Afar Regional State
- The Honorable Dr. Yilikal Kefale, President of Amhara Regional State