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Tigray External Affairs Office

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## **Statement on the Amhara Expansionist Forces Desecration of Victims of Tigray Genocide**

The government of Tigray condemns the deliberate removal, evidence tampering and destruction, and the discretion of remains of victims of genocide, which as broadcasted by Ethiopia media outlets show as led by the Amhara State Authorities and their local and national allies.

The genocidal project to exterminate the people of Tigray is backed up by a never-ending stream of evidence. The genocidal Ethiopian and Eritrean armies along with an assortment of marauding forces belonging to the Amhara expansionist forces have committed and continue to commit heinous atrocities against the people of Tigray. They have committed acts of genocide, systematically gang raped women and girls, massacred civilians, engaged in ethnic cleansing, decimated Tigray's economy, destroyed sociocultural institutions, used hunger as a weapon of war and deliberately vandalized service-providing infrastructure.

As documented by mandated institutions and media outlets, the invading forces committed unspeakable atrocities during the 8 months they occupied all of Tigray. At the end of June 2021, these forces were chased out of most parts of Tigray. But the entire Western Tigray, and parts of North-Western and Eastern Tigray remain under brutal occupation. The Amhara expansionist forces have done everything in its power to rid Western Tigray of any signs of Tigrayans ever having been there. Consequently, Tigrayans in Western Tigray have borne the brunt of these genocidal triumvirate's plan to annihilate the people of Tigray.

It should also be noted that the expansionist Amhara ruling class, which has an unparalleled gift for nursing phantom historical grievances, has annexed the entire Western Tigray. The genocidal Eritrean army continues to occupy Western Tigray, and parts of North-Western and Eastern Tigray. Since this morally corrupt ruling class has no valid basis for its irredentist claims, its preferred method for legitimizing its violent seizure of a constitutionally recognized Tigrayan territory is to create new demographic realities on the ground, including ethnic cleansing as affirmed by the US Department of State, genocide, and mass settling ethnic Amharas.

To that end, this rapacious Amhara expansionist forces with the direct participation of the occupying Eritrean army and with the full participation of the genocidal Abiy regime has unleashed unimaginable horrors on Tigrayans in the occupied parts of Tigray. In fact, over a year ago, the US State Department had publicly declared that ethnic cleansing was being committed in

Western Tigray, though such a declaration was neither followed by declaration on the determination of the Tigray genocide nor robust remedial and punitive measures. This barbaric act has led to the forcible displacement of over 2 million people internally, with additional 70 thousand people having sought refuge in the Sudan. The international community's deafening silence in the face of such barbarity has emboldened the Abiy regime, the Eritrean dictatorship and the expansionist Amhara ruling class to ramp up their repression of Tigrayans.

Emboldened by the inaction of the international community, the sadistic Amhara expansionist forces are now showing the world that there is no depth of depravity it would find revolting. Adding insult to injury the expansionist forces are now exhuming the bodies of Tigrayans its forces massacred and put in mass graves for the sole purpose of destroying evidence, presenting themselves as the victim and furthering their unconstitutional claims.

Having been presented with an incontrovertible body of evidence establishing its guilt in the massacre of Tigrayans, this sadistic expansionist forces are now busy disseminating shockingly false claims as to the identity of the victims it had buried in mass graves. By brazenly tampering with critical forensic evidence, the expansionist Amhara forces are making amateurish attempts at concealing its direct involvement in efforts to exterminate the people of Tigray.

Part of this expansionist forces strategy to divert attention away from its obvious guilt is the saturation of the airwaves with patently duplicitous claims, principally by levying baseless accusations against Tigray. By muddying the waters as to its genocidal record in Tigray, this clique seeks to evade accountability in the process. But like all criminals whose guilt becomes clearer in direct proportion to their efforts to cover up their crimes, the expansionist Amhara forces won't get far in its attempt to whitewash its genocidal record by blaming the victims.

All reasonable people around the world with an ounce of humanity should not fall for this transparent subterfuge and hold the perpetrators of genocidal massacres against Tigrayans accountable.

For its part, the Government of Tigray has always insisted on a full accounting of the atrocities committed in Tigray as well as elsewhere through an independent investigation to be conducted by an impartial international body. The invading forces, while screaming at the top of their lungs about phantom crimes committed by Tigray forces, have fought tooth and nail to prevent the idea of independent investigations from being seriously considered.

A case in point is the establishment by the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) of an independent commission (the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia) to investigate any and all atrocities committed during the Tigray war. While the Government of Tigray has given its support for the Commission, the Abiy regime is strenuously opposed to it, denying its mandate and legitimacy. In fact, like its authoritarian counterparts elsewhere allergic to external scrutiny of their human rights record, the Abiy regime has couched its objection in terms of its unlimited right to do as it pleases within its domestic jurisdiction—a shocking assertion of right to massacre one's citizens with impunity.

The Abiy regime has further vowed to do everything in its power to deny members of the Commission access to the country. Consistent with this publicly articulated threat to impede a duly established investigative body, the Abiy regime fought a losing battle against funding the commission in an attempt to render its mission impossible.

The regime has utterly failed in its efforts to stave off international pressures emanating from its well-documented genocidal record. Having sensed that the self-serving invocation of sovereignty as an all-purpose defense against critical scrutiny of its actions was not going to take it far, the criminal Abiy regime and its Amhara expansionist partners are now playing their last card: tampering with evidence by excavating the remains of Tigrayans massacred by the invading forces.

The Amhara expansionist forces territorial ambitions, even though, are accompanied with a genocidal intention on the people of Tigray for its proud history and identity, were not only limited on Tigray. The same forces are at genocidal war with minorities within its region on the peoples of Agaw and Kimant, and externally these forces have been in perpetual war in Benshangul-Gumuz and continued annexation acts in Oromia. These patterns of entering into a war with all the animate beings in their neighbors have made them a pariah forces and putting the future coexistence of the people of Amhara at a uncertain trajectory.

The criminal Abiy regime and the Amhara expansionist ruling class, bereft of the capacity for shame, have now resorted to desecration of the remains of their Tigrayan victims in service of their twisted objective of manufacturing fictitious narratives as they seek to whitewash their crimes, and evade accountability by levying baseless countervailing accusations against Tigray. However, the stench of their culpability is too strong, and the evidence of their guilt too overwhelming for such inhumane tactics to have much impact on the search for justice.

If the international community is serious about its pledge of ‘never again’ and holding perpetrators of massive human rights violations and abuses accountable, it cannot let this expansionist ruling class get away not only with vicious atrocities against Tigrayans but also with destroying traces of evidence establishing its guilt. It's time for the international community to go beyond platitudinous expressions of concern and take concrete actions to ensure a measure of accountability and justice for the countless Tigrayans that have been victimized by the Abiy and Isaias regimes as well as the predatory Amhara ruling class.

