



Global Society of Tigray Scholars and Professionals – Headquarters

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BUILDING KNOWLEDGE-BASED RESILIENT SOCIETY

gstsp.@tigray-scholars.org

scholars4tigray.org

Official Correspondence GSTS-O.C-2023-001  
The Global Society of Tigray Scholars  
and Professionals (GSTS)<sup>1</sup>

Classification: OPEN  
2<sup>nd</sup> January 2023

**HE Olusegun Obasanjo**

Former President of Nigeria, AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa

**HE Uhuru Kenyatta**

Former President of Kenya,  
Kenya's envoy to the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region

**HE Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka,**

Former Deputy President of South Africa

**Re: Urgent Request for Further Practical Actions to Foster Durable Peace  
in Ethiopia**

**Your Excellencies,**

The Global Society of Tigray Scholars and Professionals (GSTS) is deeply appreciative of your excellencies' ongoing efforts to end the more than two years-long brutal war and catastrophic humanitarian crises in Tigray, Northern Ethiopia, and thus realise durable peace in the region, country and the Horn of Africa at large. We applaud both parties, the Governments of Ethiopia and Tigray, for the commitment they have displayed to implement the ceasefire and path to sustainable peace outlined in the Pretoria Peace Agreement and subsequent senior commanders' talks in Nairobi.

We commend the critical role that the United States (US), the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the European Union (EU), and States including Kenya, South Africa and other entities played and continue to support towards actualizing the permanent cessation of hostilities and further steps afterwards.

We welcome and extol the recent visit of the high-level Ethiopian government delegation and the over thirty-two members of the international diplomatic corps and the panel of mediators to Mekelle, the capital of Tigray. All these are critical steps to galvanise peace-building measures, and thus accelerate the implementation of the initiated peace deal.

GSTS also deeply appreciate the encouraging resumption of limited basic services in some areas of Tigray.

<sup>1</sup>GSTS is a 501(C) and 33/2011 legally registered non-partisan, not-for-profit network knowledge network operating all over the world. With over 5,000 members, (approximately one-fifth of whom are PhD holders), GSTS is the largest and most active academic and professional association in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Since the onset of the war on Tigray on 4th November 2020, GSTS has been engaged in research-based fact finding; data collection and documentation, legal analysis and interpretation, and humanitarian advocacy surrounding human rights violations, amounting to war of aggression, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide perpetrated against the Tigrayan people.

However, as commendable and encouraging as all these positive steps are, there are several roadblocks and obstacles still in place that might derail or even reverse the positive steps unless they are addressed in earnest. Hence, in line with the aims and goals of the Pretoria Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) and the shared vision of sustainable peace in Ethiopia and the broader Horn of the Africa region, the GSTS would like to respectfully urge your excellencies, the government of Ethiopia and authorities of the Tigray regional government, and other peace-loving actors and stakeholders to immediately prioritise and act on the following demands to foster durable peace and lasting reconciliation in Ethiopia and beyond:

1. Unconditional and immediate withdrawal of Amhara forces from all illegally occupied territories of Tigray to their Pre-November 3, 2020, lines of deployment and enact restoration of pre-war territorial and administrative status quo ante; and the return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees to their homes, with full compensation for lost property, income, and physical and mental distress. Since the war was declared and waged on Tigray, the Amara regional government and its forces have been carrying out massive ethnic cleansing by employing various measures, including extrajudicial killings of hundreds of thousands, intentional displacement of millions of indigenous Tigrayans native to the area (over 2.3 million IDPs and more than 75,000 in refugees in Sudan), forcible disappearances of targeted individuals, deliberate and systematic removal and destruction of forensic evidence of the crimes committed including the remains of victims of genocide including using chemicals, etc. to alter and engineer the demographics. To accomplish its illegal and expansionist policy, the Amhara regional government and its forces have also effectuated further steps including destroying Tigrayan ID cards and reissuing citizens with Amhara identity cards, relocating a large number of new Amhara settlers from Gondar and other Amhara parts to Western Tigray, leasing forcefully occupied land to Amhara investors, established its own unconstitutional administrative setups etc. Thus, their complete withdrawal from all constitutionally recognized territories is of the highest priority to realise durable peace.
2. Unconditional, immediate, complete and verifiable withdrawal of Eritrean forces from all illegally occupied territories of Tigray to their Pre-November 3, 2020, lines of deployment and enact restoration of pre-war territorial and administrative status quo ante, put an end to the large-scale atrocities that these forces continue to perpetrate in all territories under their occupation. Contrary to some media reports that Eritrean forces have partially left major cities, GSTS has reliably confirmed from the ground that these barbaric forces are still actively operating in all areas they have forcefully and illegally occupied during their multiple invasions and, unfortunately, they have also continued to commit heinous atrocities including large-scale massacre, kidnapping, rape and sexual violence, looting, evidence destruction etc.
3. UN-led independent investigation into all atrocity crimes perpetrated on the civilian population of Tigray and other parts of Ethiopia and ensure criminals are held accountable; victims and survivors receive justice, as well as all reparations owed to them. GSTS strongly underlines that accountability and justice are critical elements to foster genuine healing and reconciliation among nations, nationalities and peoples in Ethiopia, lasting peace, and security pact.
4. As per UNSC Resolution 24/17 (2018) and the Peace Agreement, ensure the immediate, unconditional, unfettered and sufficient delivery of humanitarian aid to all parts of Tigray.

5. Complete resumption of all essential basic services including telecommunications, internet, electricity, banking and financial services, fuel, civilian transport (land and air), trade and other public services in all parts of Tigray.
6. Immediate and full international media access to all parts of Tigray.
7. Urgent attention for Tigrayan refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), including but not limited to:
  - a. Facilitating the urgent and safe return of Tigrayan refugees and IDPs to their original homes, land, and property;
  - b. Providing sufficient health, psychological, and financial support for all forcibly displaced Tigrayans;
  - c. Expediting the reunification of separated families;
  - d. Urgently enacting the restitution of lost properties, compensation, and rehabilitation for all victims.
8. Immediate and unconditional release of all Tigrayan prisoners, including members of the Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF), security and law enforcement forces, and all Tigrayans that were ethnically profiled, detained and interred in prison and concentration camps with reparations and immediate return to jobs and livelihoods.
9. Immediate restitution with compensation of all the properties, businesses, investments, and bank accounts of Tigrayan individuals and entities that were arbitrarily nationalised, frozen, and embargoed by the Ethiopian government.
10. Return of all Tigrayan civil servants and other employees that were dismissed and suspended solely based on ethnic profiling to their previous employment with full salary and other benefits including backpay and/or ensure adequate severance packages and other mechanisms of redress.

GSTS reiterates its unreserved commitment to work alongside all mediators and stakeholders of the ongoing peace process and all humanitarian organizations and other partners in the effort to end the devastating war on Tigray, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and support for the post-war recovery, reconstruction and development efforts of the people of Tigray.

CC:

- **HE Antony Blinken**  
Secretary of State of the United States
- **HE Josep Borrell**  
High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the European Commission
- **HE Dr. Abiy Ahmed Ali**  
Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- **HE Dr. Debretsion Gebremichael**  
President of the National Regional State of Tigray
- **H.E. Moussa Faki Mahama**  
Chairperson of the African Union Commission
- **Honourable Members of the Diplomatic Corps in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**