

Role of the U.S. in the Ethiopia-Tigray Civil War

Mulu Getaw, Dec 15, 2020

I have recently come to appreciate the meaning of the statement “**elections have consequences**”. The election of D.J. Trump has changed the balance of powers in the world so hugely that its consequences have reached even the very far region of **Tigray** in Ethiopia. The unfair U.S. support to an unelected government of Ethiopia that is colluding with Eritrea and other regional forces to attack Tigray, a constitutionally created regional state of Ethiopia, is unconscionable. Both through action and inaction, the U.S. government officials have enabled a horrific humanitarian crisis and genocide on the Tigray people. In **41 days of civil war**, thousands are killed, over 50 thousand (mostly elderly and children) are in refugee camps, & millions are internally displaced without any access to basic services such as clean water, food & more importantly denied the right to live. As reported in CNN, AP, New York Times, Washington Post, Telegraph, A-news and etc, the other dimension of the war is the ongoing ethnic profiling and imprisonment of ethnic Tigrayan civilians in Addis Ababa and anywhere outside of Tigray. Even the highly respected Director of the WHO and CEO of the Ethiopian Airlines haven't escaped such ethnic based subjugation. It is also personal to me as my parents, relatives and my colleagues are under harm and directly facing the brunt of the horrors of the civil war.

Interestingly, while the fire is burning in Ethiopia, Secretary **Pompeo** is in the Sudan to announce the de-listing of the Sudan from the US terrorist list of nations. Don't misunderstand me here. I am happy that the people of the Sudan got a relief of the unfair sanctions imposed on them for the last many years due to the ideological and political differences between their un-elected government and the US government. However, the fact that politics smacks down humanity to people at the echelons of the U.S. government is pathetic. As the pictures show, the Tigray people are at risk of extermination with the women, children and elderly suffering from the war waged by Abiy Ahmed Ali and Isayas Afewerki of Eritrea. Human catastrophe is unfolding and international genocide watching bodies have warned the phases that lead to genocide to have been met. As stated in the

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The #UN says some four percent of over 50,000 people who have fled #Tigray for #Sudan since the military operation began on November 4 are over 60 years old. After losing track of their relatives in the conflict, some elderly refugees came to Um Raquba on their own. #Ethiopia



SJTE Dec 14th press release, 'The four main acts that the provisions highlighted within United Nation's Responsibility to Protect (i.e., genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity) are currently being perpetrated against the people of Tigray. These four provisions are evident in Abiy Ahmed's actions including but not limited to the: systematic profiling, harassment and detention of people based solely on their ethnic background.'

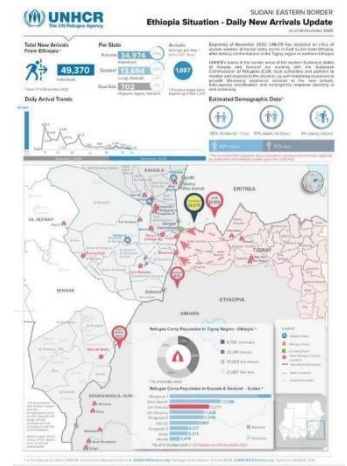
Ironically, Secretary Pompeo is visiting with the Prime Minister of the Sudan ignoring the plight of millions of people in the region and petitions by thousands of US citizens who are originally from the Tigray region.

Another important dimension of the war is its effect on UNESCO heritages. The villages and the vast mountains of Tigray host hundreds of historic churches and monasteries and these are now in the middle of the battle ground. The shelling and bombardment of cities and villages is putting these UNESCO heritages including the Aksum Obelisks, The Yeha Palace and The Arc of the Covenant at risk of damage and destruction.

The European Union and many European countries have been calling for the cessation of hostilities and opening of humanitarian corridor while the U.S. has been supporting the ongoing civil war in the pre-text of 'law enforcement'. This 'law enforcement' operation should make it to the Guinness Book of World Records due to its unique nature of being enforced using Russian made bombers and UAE owned drones for more than 40 days. As stated in the Dec 14th press release of SJTE, 'despite all the calls for peace by various governments and international organizations, Abiy Ahmed has defied the world and continued to bomb the people of Tigray on a daily basis. Humanitarian workers working for United Nations and ICRC are among the casualties. In many areas the government has blocked food items from reaching the people creating a deliberate starvation resulting in deaths. This is a serious human right abuse and a crime against humanity as stated in the United Nations Conventions.'

What can be done now? It is not still too late to ask for the stopping of hostilities as the war is still going on despite the premature declaration of 'mission accomplished' by Abiy Ahmed. Cities & Villages in Tigray are being bombed and attacked. Despite repeated calls for peace and removal of Eritrean troops, the attack by both Ethiopia and Eritrea on Tigray continues, and countless civilians are reported to have been injured or killed. Against Rule 53, starvation is being used as a method of mass punishment by Abiy Ahmed. I believe, this is a breach of international law and crime against humanity & should be prosecuted at the highest level.

I believe that it is time for the United Nations to send peacekeepers and make an immediate stop to the civil war. The United Nations has a moral and legal obligation to stop this war. This should be followed by independent investigation of war crimes and imposition of sanctions and travel bans on the authorities and government that are leading this genocidal war on the people



of Tigray. If your conscience doesn't force you to do the right thing, history will definitely judge you for your failure to protect civilians and not to uphold international law.