

# **Stop the crime against humanity and ethnic cleansing Being perpetrated by Abiy Ahmed**

By Tesfay Atsbeha

The neutral expert on Ethiopia, René Lefort wrote: “In many, if not most parts of Ethiopia, except in Tigray region, the mengist—together the authority, the power exemplified in governance, in the state apparatus and civil servants—has vanished.” (Posted on February 2020 under the title: “Preaching unity but flying solo, Abiy’s ambition may stall Ethiopia’s transition)

Tigray is the nation in which the civilization of the Kingdom of Axum flourished. The Geez Alphabet which is being used in Ethiopia is the product of the civilization of Axum. Christianity became a state religion in Axum in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The prophet Mohamed advised his followers to seek safe haven in the Kingdom of Axum and the religion of Islam became one of the religions of the kingdom. Therefore many aspects of the present Ethiopian identity have their starting point in Tigray.

Now, Tigray has become a battlefield. The prime minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed, the Amhara regional state and the Eritrean president Esaias Afwerki are attacking Tigray from the west, the south and the north.

Lines of telecommunication, electricity and internet are blocked all over Tigray. The victims of the war are common and young people who are innocent. The regional government of Tigray has repeatedly appealed to the international community to stop the senseless war. Abiy Ahmed who shared power with the leaders of the TPLF (Tigray people’s Liberation Front) for 27 Years doesn’t have any moral justification to criminalize the leaders of the TPLF.

The insistence of the TPLF to maintain the self rule of the people of Tigray is the main reason for the war, because Abiy Ahmed wants absolute power. He is vowing to arrest the leaders of the regional state, but he knows that he cannot do it and that the war would go on. Abiy Ahmed is aware of the fact that the war is victimizing the civilian population and therefore he is intentionally committing crime against humanity.

Ethiopia is a breeding place of ruthless Tyrants, a country of recurring massacres, famines and displacements of its people. As the Ethiopian tyrants cannot resolve conflicts peacefully they always resort to massacres and wars. The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea devastated both countries from 1961 to 1991 and there were several other armed conflicts within Ethiopia at the same time. The EPLF (Eritrean People’s Liberation Front) and TPLF (Tigray People’s Liberation Front) were the major forces which defeated the Ethiopian military regime in 1991.

After a short period of peace for seven years, war flared up again between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998. There was a situation of no war, no peace until 2018. President Esaias Afwerki was not willing to talk with the Ethiopian government as long as the Leaders of the TPLF who led the war which resulted in the defeat of the Eritrean president were dominant in the Ethiopian government.

The peaceful removal of the TPLF from the federal government was the green light for Esaias Afwerki to make “peace” with Ethiopia. The dialogue partner of Esaias Afwerki happened to be Abiy Ahmed as the prime minister of Ethiopia. The peace agreement is more of an alliance between Esaias Afwerki and Abiy Ahmed against the TPLF and not an inclusive agreement, but it also gave some hope to the people who were separated by the warlike situation for the time being. Abiy Ahmed owes his Nobel Peace Prize to Esaias Afwerki.

Abiy Ahmed has imprisoned leaders and members of almost all the main opposition parties. He is wreaking havoc in the Oromo regional state by deploying military command posts instead of an elected civilian administration.

Now, in the tradition of Ethiopian regimes, Abiy Ahmed is conducting air bombardments against the people of Tigray. Emperor Haileselesie made similar bombardments in Tigray in the 1940s; the military regime under Mengistu did the same in the 1970 and early 80s, killing for instance more than 2500 civilians at the market place of the town of Hawzien in June 1988.

Abiy Ahmed is repeating the barbaric bombardments of Tigray as his like-minded predecessors. The present war was preceded by preparations for genocide and ethnic cleansing:

- An open call for genocide against the people of Tigray was made by ESAT (Ethiopian Satellite Television) on 06 August 2016. ESAT was praised by Abiy Ahmed as an exemplary journalistic entity.
- There were mob killings, roadblocks, robberies against Tigrayans especially in the Amhara regional state. When three young people were murdered in the Amhara regional state one of the three was a Tigrigna speaking Eritrean. Because almost all Tigrayans and the majority of Eritreans are Tigrigna speaking. 80 000 to 90 000 Tigrayanys were forced to leave the Amhara regional state and flee to Tigray. These internally displaced people had at least somewhere to go because the TPLF controlled Tigray and Tigray had self rule which Abiy Ahmed vainly and cruelly tries to abolish thereby causing a lot of suffering and provoking a potential danger for the region
- Documentary films with fabricated incriminations of Tigrigna speaking people were disseminated by the Ethiopian federal state media.

Ethiopia has never had any democratic government and the TPLF is not an exception in this sense.

However, The TPLF has organized the people during the armed struggle against the military regime (1974 – 1991) and it has a strong mass support. Even if some members of the leadership of the TPLF have committed crimes the vast majority of the members of the TPLF are innocent.

I have been criticizing the TPLF leadership for more than 30 years for being undemocratic since I am interested in peaceful changes and enlightenment. The use of force is not a solution. Force leads only to the deterioration of the bad situation.

Abiy and cohorts are rounding up peaceful Tigrayans all over Ethiopia outside Tigray and sending them to concentration camps due to their ethnic belongingness. This ethnic cleansing will deepen the rift which has been created by the naked war of aggression.

**I appeal to the international community to help in stopping this atrocious war before it reaches uncontrollable dimensions and**

**I appeal to the Sudanese government to open a humanitarian corridor to Tigray.**