



ETHIOPIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL- EHRCO

EHRCO Stands for Democracy, the Rule of Law and the Respect of Human Rights

Immediate Press Release

Human Rights Situation in Tigray Region requires an immediate solution.

January 22, 2021

The Ethiopian Human Rights Council- EHRCO is a non-profit, independent and impartial, human rights organization that does not favour any political party, religious institution, ethnic group, social class, etc., and stands to defend human rights.

Due to the conflict in the Tigray region and its environs, EHRCO is gravely concerned about the scale of human rights abuses against unarmed civilians, conflict-prone displacement in the area, the plight of people vulnerable to suspicion and discrimination based on ethnicity, and the need for urgent humanitarian assistance. As a result of the problem in the region, a six-month state of emergency is declared limiting the human rights of the people. Among these limitations, EHRCO has learned that people have been targeted by security forces for violating curfews. For instance, journalists Dawit Kebede and Bereket Berhe were reportedly killed by security forces on January 19, 2021. The legitimacy of such measures is highly doubtful.

EHRCO has received numerous allegations of human rights abuses, including rape, extra-judicial killings, arbitrary detention, and hostage-taking during and after the war. Women, children, people with disabilities, and the elderly are the main victims of these abuses. In other parts of the country also, EHRCO has received numerous complaints of arrests, harassment, and discrimination against Tigrayans.

On the other hand, residents have been troubled and suffering for the past three months due to the lack of banking services in all but a few areas, the disruption of basic services such as electricity, water, and telephone, unpaid government workers, and poor health care facilities in numerous parts of the region.

It has been reported in various ways that the humanitarian assistance being provided in the region are inadequate in terms of provision and quantity due to the security problem in the area and the problem of aid agencies and government institutions working in tandem. If this problem happens as described and there is no immediate humanitarian response, a serious humanitarian crisis could ensue.

Hence, EHRCO urges the Federal Government and the interim Regional Administration to devise emergency routes and special mechanisms to provide emergency humanitarian assistance in areas where there is a security threat and to facilitate the provision of services in all areas. The state of emergency Board of Inquiry, established by FDRE House of Peoples' Representatives, is required to closely monitor the implementation of the proclamation and to investigate human rights violations during and after the war, to identify the perpetrators and publicize the outcome. In addition, EHRCO urges the government to facilitate for independent and impartial human rights organizations and the media to mobilize in the area and investigate the matter.

EHRCO is monitoring the situation of civilians in the region in different ways and it will publicize the results as soon as possible. Though attempts to contact the interim administration of the region to address the problems have so far failed, we will try to include their answers in the future.

January 22, 2021

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

EHRCO has an honorary position in the African Commission on Peoples and Human Rights: is a member of the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH), a member of the Anti-Torture organization (OMCT), and the founding member of the East and Africa Human Rights Defenders Defender (Defenders Defender).