



Date: March 06, 2023

A joint Statement in support and extension of ICHEE’s mandate and its continued investigations on Human rights violations.

Alliance of Civil Society Organizations of Tigray (ACSOT)

Tigray Human Rights Advocacy Network (THRAN)

Tigray Universities and Scholars Association (TUSA)

It's to be recalled that massive human rights and humanitarian law violations that may amount to major international crimes happened in Tigray in connection with the armed conflict occurred for the last two or more years. These violations are still continuing in some parts of Tigray. In response, many international human rights organizations, among others, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the UN International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia and many international media have investigated and reported that there are reasonable grounds to believe that at least war crimes and crime against humanity are committed in the two years' war on Tigray.

Against the backdrop of these, many national and international human rights groups and other international organizations have expressed their concerns on the Pretoria agreement signed between the Federal government of Ethiopia and the Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) on November 2022 for its marginalization of the issues of accountability and justice. Like these, Tigray-based Civil Society Organizations including Alliance of Civil Society Organizations of Tigray (ACSOT), multi-sectoral consortium of 72 CSOs operating in Tigray, Tigray Human Rights Advocacy Network (THRAN)-a network of rights based civil society organizations based in Tigray- and Tigray Universities Scholars Association (TUSA) are disappointed by the agreement's downgrading of the issue of justice and accountability as it failed to include robust transitional justice infrastructures that meet international standards.

We, the above mentioned Tigray-based CSO networks and our members also believe that the post-Pretoria agreement political developments in Ethiopia and Tigray tend to sideline the issue of ensuring justice and accountability for the gross human rights violations committed in Tigray over the past two or more years.

The international community (most importantly, the United Nations Human Rights Council, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the negotiators and observers of Pretoria agreement) has been negligently watching while this was happening. We, the abovementioned





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petitioners and our members, have also been following such dynamics with great concern and disappointment.

And, most alarmingly, ACSOT, THRAN and TUSA have recently learned that the Ethiopian government is currently actively engaged in smear campaign to terminate the mandate of ICHEE and its continued investigations on human rights violations in Tigray and other parts of Ethiopia. The government is engaged in an open international diplomatic and political struggle for this purpose. In response to this, significant number of human rights groups and organizations and civil society organizations have boldly opposed the move and are appealing for the United Nations Human Rights Council to defend and support the extension of the mandate of ICHEE and its continued investigations. The 63 organizations who recently released a joint statement in this regard are very good examples. ACSOT, THRAN and their members and TUSA share the concerns and recommendations of these organizations and commends their efforts.

ACSOT, THRAN and TUSA strongly believe that there can be no sustainable peace without ensuring accountability and justice for human rights and humanitarian law violations and this can be realized if the international community raises collective voice against governments (be them perpetrators or otherwise) who attempt to escape from independent investigations and accountability and effectively stops their efforts. In this spirit, we, ACSOT, THRAN and TUSA, thus call:

1. The member states in the United Nations Human Rights Council to block/stop the Ethiopian government's ongoing efforts to terminate the mandate of ICHREE and its continued investigations in Tigray and other parts of Ethiopia and also to support the commission through mobilizing adequate budget and other necessary resources and creating access for investigations;
2. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, EU Human Rights commission, international human rights groups and organizations, civil society organizations and international media to defend the mandate of the ICHREE and its continued investigations by influencing and pressurizing the UN and other relevant actors to continue mandating and financing the commission. This is necessary because national and regional institutions lack impartiality, commitment and capacity to ensure accountability and justice;
3. The international negotiators and observers of the Pretoria agreement and the international community at large to demand and pressurize the Ethiopian government, the Tigray government, the African Union and its bodies and other stakeholders to give





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primacy to ensuring accountability and justice both as an end in itself and as a means for lasting peace and stability in Ethiopia.

By doing all these the organizations mentioned here and other stakeholders should demonstrate their real commitment to save the human rights and humanitarian world order from the degenerating path it currently finds itself.

ACSOT, THRAN, their members and USA reiterate their unwavering support for the extension of the mandate of ICHEE and its continued investigations on Human rights violations in Tigray and other parts of Ethiopia.

Alliance of Civil Society Organizations of Tigray (ACSOT)

Tigray Human Rights Advocacy Network (THRAN)

and Tigray Universities Scholars Association (TUSA)

March 06, 2023,

Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia



