

Global Alliance of Tigrayan Evangelical Christians (GATEC)

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Matthew 5:9

February 4, 2021

Greetings in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We, Tigrayan Evangelical Christians residing in different countries around the world, who have gathered to pray, to dialogue and respond; hereby in this open letter declare our resolution about the “Genocidal War” and catastrophe in Tigray.

On November 4th, after midnight, the Ethiopian government suddenly under the guise of “**LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATION**”, in alliance with Eritrean and Somali army along with Amhara special forces and militias, opened a full-fledged war on the regional government of Tigray. This unlawful war has brought immense ongoing suffering and death to the people of Tigray and Tigrayans in different cities of Ethiopia.

Prior to the November 4th war, Tigray has already been affected by suspension of federal construction projects, banning of foreign investors from entering to Tigray along with closures of main federal roads that disrupted normal functioning of the region for the last three years. The Covid-19 pandemic and locust invasion coupled with the failure of the federal government to provide allocated budget and support has hit the region hard and severely affected the livelihood of the people of Tigray.

In the subsequent months of the war, we are getting gruesome reports that are coming into light every day. Towns and cities in Tigray are shelled. Civilian targets are bombed and are forced to leave their homes to shelter in rural area mountains. It is estimated 1.2 million civilians are internally displaced and estimated 4.2 million of Tigrayans are subjected to a man-made starvation, being used as a weapon of war. The UNCHR has reported that over 63,000 Tigrayan people have fled and took refugees in The Sudan.

The war now is in its 89th day, the state has no electricity, water, telephone, internet connection, that has completely cut off the state from the whole world which has made it difficult for extended families outside of the state and Tigrayans in diaspora to know the well-being of their families and relatives. There is no banking service in most of the Tigray cities for the civilians to get access of their fund to buy food & etc.

The invading forces from Eritrea, Amhara special forces and militias have mercilessly massacred and are still slaughtering innocent Tigray civilians, even those that took shelter in churches and mosques. Women, under-age girls, and children have been raped and sexually abused which is, a gross human right violation. The horrific report supported by photos and videos reveals looting of public and private household properties, hospital equipment, laboratory and pharmaceutical industry machines uprooted and taken away, university educational computers, library books, textile factory machines stolen, and factories burned. Also, from Churches and historical sites, ancient artifacts registered under UNESCO have been stolen, vandalized, and destroyed.

Also, in other states of Ethiopia there is an aggressive ongoing Ethnic profiling, harassment, removal from federal jobs and imprisonment of Tigrayans. In this ongoing war and in the face of the emerging humanitarian crisis, Tigrayans all over the world have suffered from the agony of not knowing about the safety and whereabouts of their loved ones.

Moreover, the Evangelical Church in Ethiopia and in the diaspora have failed the duty of becoming peacemaker (Matthew 5:9) and instead came out in full support of the war and gave their blessings by providing religious legitimacy for the actions of the federal government, other regional force, and a foreign nation.

Consequently, Tigrayan Evangelical Christians are now between a rock and a hard place, going through a collective trauma of suffering from death of their family members, relatives and from the constant news of destruction of their birthplaces and cities, that is further compounded by the absence of spiritual and social support in the time of their immense suffering.

Such a trying time demands the collective voice of the Global Tigrayan Evangelical Christians to rise and meet the demand of the occasion to unequivocally denounce and advocate for the safety of Tigrayans from the cruel and unjust “Genocidal war”.

We, Global Alliance of Tigrayan Evangelical Christians (GATEC) hereby:

- Denounce the unjust war and invasion waged on the state of Tigray by the Ethiopian Federal government, Eritrean government, Amhara, and Somali special forces with an intention of ethnic cleansing and committing genocide on the peaceful citizens of Tigray.
- Denounce the Ethiopian Federal government for inviting the Eritrean government, a foreign nation, to invade and commit war crimes on its own citizens.
- Demand the Eritrean forces, Amhara special forces and militias to withdraw and leave Tigray immediately
- Demand the ceasing of the involvement of external forces such as the UAE in supplying military drones for bombing civilians.
- Call on for the United Nations Security Council, the United States, EU, AU, and the international community to do an independent investigation of war crimes and human rights violation committed by the Ethiopian Federal Government, Amhara, and Eritrean forces.
- Demand urgent, unconditional access for an opening of humanitarian corridor to provide food and medical help including an access for airdrop.
- Denounce in the strongest term the unbiblical stance and lack of compassion that the church of the Evangelical Church of Ethiopia, gave its consent by giving their blessings, prayers and religious legitimacy to wage war and invade the people of Tigray.
- Denounce the silence of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church, in the face of an overwhelming humanitarian crisis in Tigray.
- Plead the global community of believers to attend to, assist the humanitarian crisis of starvation and medical assistance that is needed urgently for the millions of Tigrayans displaced and trapped in the war.
- Call on the Ethiopian Federal Government to cease immediately, from bombing churches, looting, destroying & slaughtering worshippers in their churches, and quickly restore freedom of religion in demilitarized safe zone, and let house of worship remain opened for the people of Tigray to receive comfort from their creator.

Finally, we would like to remind you the famous quote by Dr. Martin Luther King:

“The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people.”

We, the Global Alliance of Tigrayans Evangelical Christians pledge to stand alongside the Tigrayans whole heartedly here by declare our commitment joining our hands with fellow Tigrayans to rebuild and restore Tigray.

“Here’s what I’ve learned through it all; Don’t give up; don’t be impatient; be entwined as one with the Lord. Be strong and courageous, and never lose hope. Yes, keep on waiting -for He will never disappoint you.” Psalms 27:14

Truth Always Prevails!

Committee for Global Alliance of Tigrayan Evangelical Christians (GATEC)

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