

Open Letter to Her Excellency Ms. Geeta Pasi, the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia

Your Excellency,

We acknowledge, in retrospect, that many states and people of good will including the U.S have acknowledged the egregious violations of human rights committed by the TPLF regime against so many innocent individuals, political actors, journalists, scholars, ethnic groups and civil society actors in Ethiopia since the 1990s. However, it is with great dismay and utmost regret that we read the unjust statement by Secretary Antony J. Blinken on the humanitarian and security situation in the Tigray region of Ethiopia as it manifestly undermined the founding principle of the United Nations Charter – non-interference in sovereign states internal affairs– and intended to resurrect the legacy of genocide committed against Amharas by the TPLF in a bid to forcibly incorporate the Wolkayt Tegedie Setit Humera into Tigray Regional State. It is regrettable that Secretary Blinken has succumbed to fabricated claims of the TPLF remnants and credited their fake allegations before legitimate investigations are conducted by appropriate organs.

Although we duly appreciate the expressed concern and engagement by the Secretary to alleviate humanitarian and human rights situation, we believe the position taken grossly misrepresents the reality on the ground. It assigns blame for the reported instances of blocking humanitarian assistance squarely on the Ethiopian military as well as on Amhara regional forces although sabotages against humanitarian assistance were clearly perpetrated by the TPLF. Whilst the delicate situation in Tigray requires a balanced view that is grounded in history, the swift generalization which characterized the Secretary's statement falls significantly short of the highest standard for truth and balance.

Furthermore, the outrageous accusation labelled against the Amhara regional forces contradicts with the reality on the ground. Such an unfounded and injudicious accusation is maliciously counterproductive as it will ultimately undermine the joint human rights investigation being conducted by the UN Office of High Commissioner on Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission. The fact that this unjust accusation against the Amhara regional forces has been made before the completion of the investigation gives us the impression that his statement was not motivated by human rights and humanitarian concerns but intended to extend moral support to the TPLF terrorist group which had





committed heinous crimes including genocide against the Amhara People for more than three decades.

Moreover, the Secretary's demand that the federal government remove Amhara regional forces is in clear violation of the standard and norms of international law. It constitutes an explicit interference with a country's internal affairs and therefore defeats the letter and spirit of the selfsame international law which the statement professes to uphold. Besides his demand is flawed in terms of fact. To begin with, there are no Amhara regional forces in Tigray Region. What he referred in his statement as Western Tigray was incorporated into Tigray Region illegally and forcibly before the adoption of the FDRE Constitution by committing genocide and ethnic cleansing against Amharas living in Wolkayt Tegedie and Setit Humera. History has it that thousands were extrajudicially killed because of their identity and hundreds of thousands had been forced to flee to Sudan and other parts of Ethiopia. Following the law enforcement operation, the residents of Wolkayt Tegedie and Setit Humera have liberated themselves from TPLF's decades long apartheid rule and have reestablished their zonal administration. To urge the return of the Wolkayt Tegedie and Setit Humera Administrative Zone to Tigray Region is in clear violation of the will of the people and is imprudent attempt to resurrect the TPLF's legacy of genocide which resulted in the incorporation of Wolkayt Tegedie and Setit Humera into Tigray Region some thirty years ago. It would expose the people to a second round of Maikadra like genocide which was investigated and reported by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Amnesty International. If there is a claim against Wolkayt Tegedie and Setit Humera Administrative Zone, it is for the Transitional Government of Tigray to resort to the law of the land.

Generally, the belligerent posture taken by the US State Department only serves to put undue obstacle to the cause of justice and lasting peace in Ethiopia, in addition to undermining the ideal of the society of nations that is grounded on a relationship of equality and of mutual respect. It should be duly recognized that taking unwarranted position and attempts to impose unjust ultimatums and musts will subsequently result in an unending conflict and massive humanitarian crises in the unstable horn and East Africa. Therefore, we urge the US government to seriously reconsider its position on Ethiopia in general, and the Amhara regional forces and Wolkayt Tegedie and Setit Humera Administrative Zone in particular.

