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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0384/2020**

24.11.2020

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on: Situation in Ethiopia  
(2020/2881(RSP))

**Kati Piri, Carlos Zorrinho**  
on behalf of the S&D Group

**B9-0384/2020**

**European Parliament resolution on: Situation in Ethiopia  
(2020/2881(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Ethiopia,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966,
- having regard to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
- having regard to the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance,
- having regard to the Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship between Ethiopia and Eritrea signed on 9 July 2018,
- having regard to the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2019,
- having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2018 on progress on the UN Global Compacts for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and on Refugees (2018/2642(RSP)),
- having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 3 May 2018 on the protection of children in migration (2018/2666(RSP)),
- having regard to the statement of the UN Secretary-General on 4. November 2020,
- having regard to the statement of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet on 6. November 2020,
- having regard to the call of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development on 7. November 2020,
- having regard to the statement of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, on the situation in Ethiopia on 9 November 2020,
- having regard to statement of the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Co-Presidents on 9. November 2020,
- having regard to the statement of the EU member states foreign affairs ministers on 19. November 2020,

- having regard to the Joint Statement by the EU High Representative/Vice-President Borrell and Commissioner Janez Lenarčič on Ethiopia on 12 November 2020,
  - having regard to rule 144 of its rules of procedure.
- A. whereas violence in Ethiopia's northern state of Tigray has left thousands of civilians dead in violent clashes between regional forces and the national government;
  - B. whereas serious fighting erupted on November 4 after Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, ordered his forces to respond to an alleged raid on an army camp in the Tigray region something which Tigrayan forces have denied and claimed as a fabrication for Ethiopian forces launching the military assault
  - C. whereas the Tigray People's Liberation Front, exercised power and ruled the country as part of a multiethnic coalition prior to 2018 until it was dissolved by PM Abiy; Whereas the TPLF took the decision not to join its successor, the Prosperity Party and has claimed that its officials have been systematically targeted by Addis Ababa in corruption trials and removed from official positions, and that ethnic Tigrayans face regular discrimination and harassment since Abiy's arrival in power.
  - D. whereas tensions have escalated in recent months after the postponement of national elections and the decision to extend elected officials' mandates; Whereas Tigrayan authorities proceeded to hold regional elections in September 2020, which were subsequently declared illegal by Prime Minister Abiy.
  - E. whereas on the 10 November 2020, a series of mass killings were reported to have been carried out in the town of Mai Kadra, near the Sudanese border in which over 500 people may have been killed; Whereas reports of the mass killing of civilians in Tigray would amount to war crimes if confirmed according to the UN.
  - F. Whereas Ethiopian authorities have historically used excessive force against demonstrators and committed human rights abuses including arbitrary arrests and killings, in the face of perceived opposition; whereas Ethiopia's government regularly accuses those who criticise government policy of association with terrorism; whereas journalists, bloggers, protesters, and activists have been repeatedly prosecuted under the country's tough 2009 Anti-Terrorism Proclamation;
  - G. whereas more than 35,000 Ethiopian refugees, have already fled to Sudan which is already playing host to around 1 million refugees with aid groups and the U.N. are already struggling to provide services; Whereas it is estimated many hundreds of thousands of people could flee Ethiopia as a result of the conflict.
  - H. whereas many civilians in Tigray and other parts of Ethiopia were already facing food insecurity and are now facing shortages of fuel, electricity, water, medical supplies, and cash;
  - I. whereas the violence risks destabilising the Horn of Africa, with rockets having been fired into Eritrea,

whereas Ethiopia has withdrawn thousands of troops from Somalia fighting Islamist insurgents whereas Kenyan authorities have scaled up security at the border with Ethiopia amid fears of escalating tensions;

- J. whereas protests took place across Ethiopia in response to the June 29 2020 killing of Hachalu Hundessa, a popular Oromo singer became a s became a symbol of the Oromo people during the 2014-2018 anti-government protest movement following which-the government cut internet services across the country in an attempt to quell dissent and cover the use of excessive force against protesters, large scale property destruction and violence by civilian assailants targeting minority communities in Oromia;
  - K. whereas the attacks highlighted existing social and political tensions, which were further exacerbated by the arrest of dozens of members of opposition parties in July 2020 for their alleged connection with the violence;
  - L. whereas Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies in Africa, but nevertheless remains one of the poorest economies, with a GNI per capita of USD 850; whereas it ranked 173rd out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index for 2019; whereas Ethiopia's economy is already facing numerous shocks as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the locust plague which ravaged crops and the effects of climate change - all of which have a disproportionate effect on the most disadvantaged;
  - M. whereas Ethiopia is a signatory to the Cotonou Agreement, Article 96 of which stipulates that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential element of ACP-EU cooperation;
  - N. whereas in 2020, the EU is providing €44.29 million to humanitarian projects in Ethiopia by supporting the provision of live-saving assistance to internally displaced people uprooted by violence or natural hazards.
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- 1. Calls for an immediate ceasefire between all parties to the Tigray conflict; urges all sides to urgently engage in talks to find a lasting peaceful solution, establish a ceasefire monitoring mechanism, and work towards building national consensus through an inclusive dialogue; calls on the HR/VP, the United Nations, the EEAS, the EU Delegations to Ethiopia and to the African Union, and the Member States to provide full support for the mediation efforts of the three African Union-appointed special envoys;
  - 2. Expresses its sorrow and condemns the loss of life in the recent clashes between Ethiopian Government and Tigrayan forces. Calls on both sides to immediately halt all acts of violence, disinformation campaigns and take immediate steps to de-escalate the conflict, restore peace and protect civilians;
  - 3. Calls on Ethiopia's neighbouring states, including Eritrea, as well as other states in the wider region to refrain from escalating tensions; emphasises that failure to do so risks destabilising the wider region with disastrous consequences for international peace and security; emphasises the crucial role Ethiopia's neighbouring states can play in providing diplomatic support towards the de-escalation of the conflict and, where possible and with the assistance of the UN, AU, EU and other international actors, extending humanitarian support, in particular to refugees;
  - 4. Strongly condemns the killing of civilians in the conflict; expresses its deep concern over the reported massacre of civilians in Mai-Kadra; calls for an urgent international

investigation into the alleged massacre and demands that all perpetrators be held accountable;

5. Calls on federal and regional authorities to allow immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access and relief to the affected populations in Tigray and lift all communication restrictions currently in place, which have hampered humanitarian operations, limited independent reporting and cut off relatives from loved ones;
6. Welcomes the emergency assistance of €4 million mobilised by the Commission to help support displaced Ethiopians arriving in Sudan through NGOs and UN agencies in Kassala and Gedarfif states; expresses appreciation for Sudan's readiness to welcome refugees fleeing the conflict; highlights the urgent need for preparation for the arrival of up to 200,000 refugees in Sudan; requests the Commission provide additional emergency assistance as needed;
7. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to urgently provide emergency humanitarian support to Tigray Region, including through the provision of basic necessities such as shelter, access to healthcare, water, food and fuel as soon as the security situation allows;
8. Welcomes the Ethiopian government's commitment to holding general elections before September 2021; urges all political actors across the country to engage in a political dialogue involving citizens from across the political, ideological, regional and ethnic spectrum ahead of the elections; firmly underlines that free, fair, inclusive and credible elections can only take place in an atmosphere free from intimidation, violence and harassment, with guaranteed freedom of speech and association, in line with international norms;
9. Regrets that the commitment to free elections has been undermined by the detention of several political opposition leaders from across the political spectrum since June 2020 and serious due process violations that undermine the detainees' rights to a fair trial. Calls on authorities to release all those detained unless they are charged with legally recognizable offenses and can be prosecuted in accordance with international fair trial standards;
10. Reminds the Ethiopian Government of its obligations to guarantee fundamental rights, including access to justice and the right to a fair trial, as provided for in the African Charter and other international and regional human rights instruments, including the Cotonou Agreement and specifically Articles 8 and 96 thereof; recalls that, in light of his being awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize, Prime Minister Abiy holds a particular responsibility for safeguarding the human rights of all Ethiopians;
11. Express deep concern about reports of physical and digital surveillance, mass arbitrary arrests and detentions, and job suspensions of ethnic Tigrayans and Tigrinya speakers across the country; demands federal authorities end the practice of arbitrarily arresting and targeting ethnic Tigrayans and Tigrinya speakers, and bring those to justice responsible for such actions; urges national and local authorities, media organizations, and the public to refrain from engaging in incitement to violence towards, discrimination of, or hostility against populations at risk;

12. Calls on the federal authorities to urgently identify and disclose the whereabouts of those who have been detained incommunicado in response to the escalating crisis in Tigray and permit those detained access to legal counsel and relatives;
13. Calls for a credible, independent investigation with international assistance into recent alleged serious human rights violations including against ethnic and religious minorities in the Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz regions, as well as security forces' alleged use of excessive lethal force, arbitrary detention, arrest, and repression of political opponents, protesters, and members of the Oromo community owing to their suspected political affiliations to, or perceived involvement in, the June 2020 violence;
14. Urges the Ethiopian Government to fully respect freedom of expression, association and of the press as provided for in the Ethiopian Constitution and to release unjustly detained journalists and bloggers; firmly believes that peaceful protest is part of a democratic process and that responding with excessive force should be avoided under all circumstances;
15. Urges the EU and its member states to step up all diplomatic efforts with concerned federal and regional authorities, as well as with regional partners and multilateral institutions, to protect civilians in danger and ensure unhindered humanitarian access to the affected area; Calls on the EU and its member states to provide urgent mobilization of additional resources to address potential new needs as a result of the conflict, including food aid and shelter;
  16. Calls on the EU and its Member States to stand ready to take any necessary action, including through possible individual targeted measures; reiterates its call on the Council to adopt the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime as a decision relating to the Union's strategic interests and objectives under Article 22(1) of the TEU;
16. Recalls that Ethiopia is an important country of destination, transit and origin for migrants and that it hosts the largest refugee population in Africa; Takes note of the Common Agenda on Migration between the EU and Ethiopia encompassing the issues of refugees, border control and the fight against human trafficking; Calls also on the European Commission to closely monitor all projects initiated within the framework of the EU Trust Fund for Africa, ensuring that such joint actions remain compliant with international human rights law;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy: the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the European External Action Service, the Federal Government and House of Federation of Ethiopia, the governments of the IGAD, the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

