



Plenary sitting

B9-0385/2020

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 the situation in Ethiopia
(2020/2881(RSP))

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B9-0385/2020

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Ethiopia
(2020/2881(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Ethiopia,
- having regard to the Joint Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell and Commissioner Janez Lenarč of 12 November 2020,
- having regard to the statements by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell on 24 October, 2 and 9 November 2020,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, to which Ethiopia acceded on 11 June 1993,
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981, ratified by Ethiopia on 15 June 1998,
- having regard to the second revision of the Cotonou Agreement,
- having regard to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia adopted on 8 December 1994, and in particular the provisions of Chapter III on fundamental rights and freedoms, human rights and democratic rights,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. whereas the current armed conflict between the Federal government of Ethiopia and the regional administration of Tigray, led by the Tigray Liberation Front (TPLF), is causing loss of life, destruction of property and displacement of population;
- B. whereas on the 4th November the Ethiopian government declared the state of emergency and launched military operations in the northern Tigray region a day after a reported attack by the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) against the federal military base of the federal government in the Tigray region;
- C. whereas the current escalating military confrontations between the Federal government of Ethiopia and the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) mark the climax of growing tension since the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took power in 2018; recalling that the TPLF ruled the country until 2018 under the banner of EPRDF: Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the Amhara Democratic Party (ADP), the Oromo Democratic Party (ODP) and the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM);
- D. recalling that the TPLF ruled the country with violation of human rights, absence of

democratic principles and rule of law, which led a massive protest across the country, which resulted in 2018 a leadership change within the EPRDF; whereas this supposedly balanced political coalition was dominated by and served the interest of the TPLF which shaped and controlled major political and economic decisions.

- E. whereas in 2019, Abiy Ahmed proposes to replace the EPRDF with a new national party, the Prosperity Party (PP), which is a merger of the three fronts, former members of EPRDF, with the exception of the TPLF, which refused to join the new party, claiming that the disappearance of the ethnicity based EPRDF, would divide the country;
- F. whereas the political divergence between the PP and the TPLF was further accentuated when the federal government postponed national elections, scheduled for May 2020, due to the COVID-19 crisis;
- G. whereas in September 2020, the TPLF-led Tigray regional administration, held its own election, in violation of the rules set in the federal Constitution, and declared illegal the Ethiopian government since its term was supposed to end in September 2020; whereas the federal parliament deemed the electoral process in the Tigray region to be illegal;
- H. whereas at the time of TPLF dominant position into power the Ethiopian political environment was characterised by a large state control on the media, restricted campaign possibilities for the opposition, oppression of peaceful protests, restricted space for human rights' defenders and civil society organisations and a lack of accountability of Ethiopian authorities;
- I. whereas the Abiy government took significant steps to free journalists and political prisoners, allow previously banned opposition groups to operate, and adopt new laws on civil society organizations and on countering terrorism; whereas concerns remain at the adoption of a new law aimed at curbing hate speech and disinformation, which may adversely affect freedom of expression;
- J. whereas Abiy Ahmed achieved a historic peace deal with Eritrea ending more than a decade's long suspension of diplomatic and commercial ties between the two countries;
- K. whereas Ethiopia is at a delicate juncture of democratic transition and faces challenges to achieve peace, political pluralism, respect for human rights and rule of law; whereas some political groups, rather than using the newly gained freedom to promote peace and development, equality and unity, respect for human and democratic rights and the prevalence of the rule of law, they embarked on preaching ethnic hatred, creating mistrust between communities and instigating ethnic conflict whereas last June, widespread violence broke out following the death of Hachalu Hundessa, leading singer and activist from the Oromo region, where hundreds were killed and arrested; whereas more than 50 Amharas people were killed in attacks on three villages which are being widely viewed as ethnically-motivated and possibly carried by the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), a breakaway militia from the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF);
- L. whereas the EU's development cooperation with Ethiopia is one of the largest in the world with €815 million for the period 2014-2020; whereas Ethiopia is also one of the major beneficiaries of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa with over € 271.5

million for 2015-2019;

M. whereas according to DG ECHO, as of 19 November between 150,000 and 200,000 are fleeing Tigray for other Ethiopian regions; whereas according to UN OCHA, as of 17 November, more than 28,000 refugees had fled the conflict and crossed the border into neighbouring Sudan; whereas the European Commission is mobilising an initial €4 million in emergency assistance to help support the displaced people arriving in Sudan;

1. Deplores the current armed conflict between the federal government of Ethiopia and the regional administration of Tigray, led by TPLF; calls on both parties to commit to an immediate ceasefire and to solve political divergence by peaceful and democratic means within the framework of the country's constitution to avoid additional loss of life, mass displacement, and further destabilization of the country and the whole region of the Horn of Africa;
2. Calls vehemently on the federal and regional governments in Ethiopia to abstain from further escalation of the military conflict as well as all of neighbouring countries to refrain from all political and military interventions that could fuel the conflict; insists that all actors strictly follow a human centred security approach;
3. Commends Ethiopia for the progress it has recently made in improving respect of human rights and its democratic transition; calls on the Ethiopian federal and regional authorities to break the cycle of violence fuelled by ethnic discrimination and take steps to develop a peaceful, inclusive and constructive dialogue between all different communities and ensure their protection across the country;
4. Expresses strong concerns about the humanitarian impact of the ongoing conflict; warns for the danger of a major humanitarian crisis in the country as well as in neighbouring states and the wider region;
5. Insists on the urgency of ensuring civilian protection, given the reports of human rights violations on both sides and contravention of international humanitarian law;
6. Call for international and regional borders to remain open for safe and free movements of civilians as well as an immediate and unconditional access of impartial humanitarian actors to people in need organised independently from parties to the conflict;
7. Recalls that Ethiopia is an important country of destination, transit and origin for migrants; calls also on the European Commission and Member states to ensure all projects initiated within the framework of the EU Trust Fund for Africa respect human rights in all funded projects, in particular the rights of migrants and IDPs;
8. Shares the assumption that Ethiopia is a stability factor and that a regional war may considerably endangers the transition in Sudan and possibly affects the Eritrean-Ethiopian peace agreement as well as the security situation in Somalia;
9. Expresses strong concerns and warns about the prospect food shortage and famine due to the combination of the current military conflict, bad harvest and the unprecedented

locust plague within the last 25 years.as surveillance and spraying operations have ceased due to conflict

10. Calls on the national authorities to re-establish all basic services and restore communication with civilians in the Tigray region, as the right of all people to be informed and to access information is particularly vital in a crisis situation; urges to allow independent reporting on the situation; insist on the importance to immediately give independent media access to Tigray;
11. Calls for an independent and impartial inquiry commission to investigate the attacks targeting specific ethnic and religious groups with the intention of inciting inter communal violence and endangering the peace and security of the Ethiopian people across the country since 2018, including the recent killings in the Tigray region; calls on the Ethiopian government to ensure those responsible are held accountable;
12. Calls on the international community to acknowledge and act on the recognition that the international silence on the TPLF's conduct when into power and since Abiy has been elected, has played a significant role in creating the conditions for this current crisis and contributes to question the credibility of the international community in its role as mediator;
13. Demand the federal government of Ethiopia and the regional authorities to ensure protection of the population and guarantee their fundamental rights, including the right to work and live in any place of the country as a citizen;
14. Calls on the EU and its Member States for urgent mobilization as well as structured and concerted deployment of additional resources to address all-encompassing conflict triggered needs; calls on the EU to offer its contribution in any possible inclusive and holistic de-escalation strategy;
15. 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 and its Member States, the Pan-African Parliament, and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.