



Plenary sitting

B9-0387/2020

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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on behalf of the Renew Group

B9-0387/2020

**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 statement of 9 November 2020 by High Representative/ Vice-President Josep Borrell on the latest development in Ethiopia,
- having regard to the joint statement of 12 November 2020 by High Representative/ Vice-President Josep Borrell and Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič on Ethiopia,
- having regard to the statement of 19 November 2020 by Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner for Crisis Management on the “*Tigray conflict: EU humanitarian support to Ethiopian refugees reaching Sudan*”,
- having regard to the statement of 6 and 13 November 2020 by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet on Tigray,
- having regard to the statement of 9 November 2020 by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat on Ethiopia,
- having regard to the Constitution of the Federal Democratic 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 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights,
- having regard to the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure

- A. Whereas ethnically-based attacks are on the rise throughout the country, mainly targeting Amhara ethnic group;
- B. Whereas, according to the National Amhara Movement, Ethiopian authorities have banned peaceful protests against ethnically motivated killings which were due to take place on 28 October 2020;

- C. Whereas on 1 November 2020 in the western Oromia state, civilians were targeted leading to 50 deaths - mainly children, women and elderly persons - who were reportedly members of the Amhara ethnic group;
- D. Whereas there are accusations of some ethnic groups, that feel marginalized by Ethiopia's federalist system of government, that allege that it has resulted in ethnic favouritism and discrimination;
- E. Whereas on 1 December 2019, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed merged several ethnically based regional parties (the former ruling coalition) into a single political party (Prosperity Party, PP), regional and political tensions have risen; Whereas the distancing of the country's politics from ethnic federalism was heavily criticised by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), while being only regional party not to join the new PP;
- F. Whereas the upper house of the national parliament decided in June to extend all federal and regional government's terms beyond their constitutional mandate, citing the need to delay elections due to the Covid-19 pandemic; Whereas the TPLF organised their own regional poll, criticising the lack of authority for regional governments to run their own elections and Tigrayan leaders withdrew from parliament; Whereas the federal government dismissed the new TPLF government elected on 9 September as unlawful;
- G. Whereas the TPLF stated that the federal administration had no legal authority after its term expired on 5 October 2020; Whereas the Ethiopian parliament nullified the results and announced substantial cuts in the budgetary support to Tigray's regional government, diverting these funds to the local administrations; Whereas Tigray's leadership announced no longer recognising the federal administration or its laws; Whereas on 3 November 2020 the federal parliament declared the TPLF a "terrorist group";
- H. Whereas on 4 November 2020 Prime Minister Abiy declared a state of emergency and launched a military operation in the northern Tigray regional state after a reported TPLF attack targeting the military base of the Ethiopian National Defence Force's located near the border with Eritrea;
- I. Whereas on 8 November 2020 TPLF approached the African Union to suggest talks but the federal government ruled out any possibility of negotiations with the TPLF arguing that the Tigray conflict is an internal matter that should not be internationalised; Whereas Abiy Ahmed has rejected international calls for dialogue and mediation; Whereas the EU offered their support for any action contributing to de-escalation of tensions, return to dialogue and securing rule of law throughout Ethiopia;
- J. Whereas, according to international human rights organisations, there have been several occasions of indiscriminate killings of civilians in different parts of Tigray, including a massacre that took place on the night of 9 November 2020 in Mai-Kadra, Tigray Region, where hundreds of civilians were killed which could amount to war crimes;
- K. Whereas, according to international human rights organisations, Tigrayan residents elsewhere in the country have been suspended from their jobs and prevented from flying externally; Whereas the current fighting in Tigray may increase discrimination, hostility or violence toward ordinary Tigrayans;
- L. Whereas the current conflict risks intensifying existing or sparking new security situations in Ethiopia, creating a security vacuum in the region and renewed ethnic violence;
- M. Whereas the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reports of cuts to essential water and electricity supplies in addition to the communications blackout, the blocking of access by road and air, as well as bank closure in the Tigray region; Whereas there are already shortages of basic commodities impacting the most vulnerable first; Whereas according to OCHA, there are some 600.000 food beneficiaries in the region, about 100.000 internally displaced persons and some 96.000 Eritreans living in four refugee camps; Whereas prior

to the conflict there were already more than 15 million persons in need of humanitarian assistance throughout Ethiopia; whereas it is estimated that another one million persons will be in need of humanitarian assistance in the case of a protracted conflict;

- N. Whereas Tigray's president confirmed his forces had fired rockets targeting Eritrea's Asmara airport;
 - O. Whereas the countries in the Nile basin must avoid to interfere in the actual conflict;
 - P. Whereas more than 36,000 Ethiopian refugees crossed the Sudanese border since the beginning of the fights in Tigray region; Whereas the European Commission is mobilising an initial €4 million in emergency assistance to help support the displaced people arriving in Sudan; Whereas international humanitarian organizations on the ground are ill-equipped and face shortages of supplies needed to treat newly arriving refugees and victims of violence;
 - Q. Whereas current humanitarian funding is largely insufficient and there is an urgent need to mobilize additional emergency funding to tackle the humanitarian consequences of the current conflict; whereas some humanitarian and development funding has been temporarily suspended due to fears that it will be used for the conflict; Whereas there is an urgent need to prepare for long term humanitarian consequences as a result of the significant influx of displaced people in neighbouring countries;
 - R. Whereas the deadly fighting between the Ethiopian federal forces and the Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front has raised international concern about a possible long-lasting civil war that could have repercussions on neighboring countries and destabilize the entire Horn of Africa region;
 - S. Whereas Sudan is on a fragile path towards democracy and seems sorely lacking in means to accommodate the 200,000 Ethiopians who could arrive there in the days or weeks to come according to the Sudanese governmental; whereas Sudan is already overwhelmed by 1,200,000 refugees and more than 2,000,000 internally displaced persons according to the UNICEF representative in the country;
 - T. Whereas, if facing difficulties, Ethiopia may withdraw its soldiers from the Somalia Peace Mission (AMISOM) of which they are one of the main forces;
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- 1. Expresses its solidarity with the victims and the families of those affected; Deplores the loss of life and killings of innocent civilians and the extra judicial killings, regardless of their perpetrators;
 - 2. Firmly insists that federal and local authorities must step up their efforts to combat discrimination and to end armed attacks on minority groups; Calls on Ethiopian federal authorities to conduct a thorough, independent, effective and impartial investigation into any and all killings and human rights violations, including use of excessive force, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances and calls upon the Tigrayan authorities to cooperate on these investigations;
 - 3. Calls on all Ethiopian authorities to actively combat impunity and to bring to justice all perpetrators, including those of human rights violations, through fair and independent trials;
 - 4. Calls on all parties involved in the conflict in the northern Tigray region to ensure unrestrained access to independent human rights monitors to ensure that international human rights standards are upheld; Calls on all sides of the conflict to investigate and work closely with relevant actors, to conduct a transparent investigation into the Mai-

Kadra massacre and urges that the perpetrators of this crime are held to account and are prosecuted without delay;

5. Is deeply concerned about the growing spread of misinformation and the use of hate speech, pitting ethnic groups against one another for the benefit of the current conflict in Tigray; Calls on all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from using inflammatory language and hate speech both off- and online; Insists that Ethiopian authorities must push back against illegal hate speech as a whole and refrain from imposing measures that fuel intolerance and risk alienating minority ethnic groups, most notably Tigrayans;
6. Insists that all parties in the Tigray conflict ensure full respect of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law and ensure the protection of civilians; Urges all sides, and regional authorities, to minimize harm to the civilian population; Calls on all parties to the conflict to ensure and allow access to basic services for civilians at all times;
7. Stresses the importance of and the need to uphold freedom of expression and access to information, both online and offline; Calls on all parties to the conflict to guarantee safe and free movement of civilians and to ensure that the right of freedom of assembly is upheld;
8. Is deeply concerned by the de facto communications black out in the northern Tigray region; Urges the Ethiopian government to restore all forms of communication to Tigray as an act of accountability and transparency for its military operations in the region and to allow for free communication among the people of Tigray; Condemns the act of depriving regions and its people of communications during moments of conflict and political and social unrest;
9. Is deeply worried about the growing humanitarian crisis and the risk of famine in the Tigray region; Recalls the destruction of vast areas of cropped land in Tigray region due to the locust infestations and the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic; Is equally worried about the humanitarian spill-over effect of the conflict situation on neighbouring regions and countries, most notably Sudan; Calls for close cooperation of EU humanitarian aid entities with UNHCR and for the UNHCR to continue its providing support to the refugees as a result of this crisis, including near the areas they fled from; Recalls that the Ethiopian government is responsible for the safety and security of refugees and internally displaced persons on their territory; Recalls that over 96,000 Eritrean refugees are mostly sheltered in refugee camps in Tigray region; Deplores the fact that currently access for humanitarian workers is severely restricted; Urges all parties to the conflict in Ethiopia to allow immediate full and unrestricted access for humanitarian workers to all areas affected by fighting; Calls on all parties of the conflict to refrain from instrumentalisation and the tying of access to humanitarian assistance and aid to political or military priorities;
10. Is extremely concerned about the fact that the conflict in Tigray could destabilize the Horn of Africa region and other parts of Ethiopia; Deplores any act of aggression towards third parties, in an attempt to draw them into the conflict; Calls on both parties to the conflict to avoid by all means extending the conflict to neighboring countries; Calls on the Eritrean government to refrain from a military response to the recent rocket attacks targeting Asmara airport; Calls on the African Union to act as an impartial and legitimate actor in mediation efforts to prevent and end the violence; Calls on neighboring countries not to get involved or to aggravate the situation in any way;
11. Calls on Ethiopian authorities to cooperate with efforts by international organizations, such as the African Union, the IGAD and the European Union, to enter in an inclusive dialogue in an effort to reach peace, security and stability in the country and in the region; Calls upon the EU to continue to use all necessary diplomatic means, to engage partner countries and organizations in the region, to resolve the conflict in a peaceful manner;

12. Considers it of utmost importance that the Ethiopian and the Tigrayan authorities exercise responsible leadership, by fostering an inclusive political environment for all actors and ethnic groups; Insists that Ethiopian authorities ensure that respect of a fair and impartial rule of law throughout Ethiopia is upheld;
13. Calls on all Ethiopian authorities to ensure and hold inclusive and free and fair elections with the participation of all political actors, peoples and ethnic groups, in accordance with international standards and in respect of the constitution of Ethiopia;
14. Underlines that any change by force or fiat to Ethiopia's constitutional order or to its internal or external borders will not be recognized; Calls on the two conflict parties and its neighbours to avoid inflammatory language that could jeopardize the integrity of Ethiopia and instead to foster an inclusive approach on its future including on the level of the Horn of Africa Cooperation (HoAC);
15. Welcomes the African Union's appointment of three high-level envoys as an important initiative for peace, and calls the EU to support the mediation efforts of the African Union in this context;
16. Calls on the EU and its partners to support the Sudanese Government and local authorities in carrying out an urgent response to host the Ethiopian refugees fleeing the fights in Tigray region; Emphasises the need to ensure protection and safety for Internally Displaced Persons and asylum seekers from third countries, held up in Ethiopia from since before the conflict;
17. Calls on the Ethiopian government to counter discrimination, to implement reforms to protect human rights and to guarantee equal access to government services and resources for all ethnic groups;
18. Calls on the EU and Ethiopian authorities to work closely together and to deploy all possible means to ensure the safety and evacuation where necessary, of non-Ethiopian and European citizens caught in, or in immediate danger due to the conflict in the Tigray region;
19. 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 Tigrayan authorities, the governments of the IGAD, the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly;