



Plenary sitting

B9-0487/2021

4.10.2021

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the humanitarian situation in Tigray
(2021/2902(RSP))

Pedro Marques, Maria Arena
on behalf of the S&D Group

B9-0487/2021

**European Parliament resolution on the humanitarian situation in Tigray
(2021/2902(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Ethiopia,
- having regard to the statement of 9 November 2020 by the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,
- having regard to the situation report of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on Ethiopia, last updated on 21 September 2021,
- having regard to the statement of 11 March 2021 by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, on the situation in Ethiopia,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 11 March 2021 on Ethiopia,
- having regard to the statement of 12 July 2021 by Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) Josep Borrell on the latest developments in Ethiopia,
- having regard to the statement of 26 August 2021 by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on the de facto humanitarian blockade in Ethiopia,
- having regard to the statement of 13 September 2021 by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet on Tigray,
- having regard to the situation report of the UN OCHA on Ethiopia, released on 23 September 2021,
- having regard to the statement of 30 September 2021 by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on the expulsion of UN officials,
- having regard to the joint statement of 8 February 2021 by Vice-President / High Representative Josep Borrell, Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen and Commissioner for Crisis Management Janez Lenarčič on Ethiopia,
- having regard to the joint statement of 23 June 2021 by Vice-President / High Representative Borrell and Commissioner Lenarčič on the airstrike in the Tigray region,
- having regard to the joint statement of 25 June 2021 by Vice-President / High Representative Borrell and Commissioner Lenarčič on the killing of three humanitarian workers in Tigray,
- having regard to the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia adopted on 8 December 1994, and in particular the provisions of Chapter Three 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 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to the second revision of the Cotonou Agreement,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, although Ethiopian federal government forces pulled out of much of the Tigray region on 28 July 2021, their forces and allies have since imposed a de facto blockade on the region, with access routes to Afar and Amhara heavily militarised; whereas this has led to a chronic shortage of food supplies, medicines and fuel at a time when 5.2 million people are in need of urgent assistance, a situation that only looks set to worsen;
 - B. whereas even before the fighting began there were 15.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia, 2 million of whom in the Tigray region; whereas the Tigray region is the fifth most populated region in Ethiopia with over 6 million people, and is home to 100 000 internally displaced people and 96 000 Eritrean refugees; whereas it has several large refugee camps in which, according to NGOs, 44 % of those living there are children; whereas as of July 2021, the conflict has displaced around 1.9 million people in Tigray;
 - C. whereas since the start of the conflict in Tigray in November 2020, access to real-time information has been severely hindered by government-imposed restrictions, including cutting of communications and hampering humanitarian efforts and preventing reporting on events in Tigray, as well as in the Afar and Amhara regions where the conflict has expanded;
 - D. whereas numerous reports have come to light of mass killings of civilians following battlefield losses of Ethiopian and Eritrean troops; whereas in August 2021, Sudanese authorities reported that the bodies of around 50 people were found in the Tekeze River, bordering western Tigray and Sudan; whereas in January 2021, Ethiopian and Eritrean forces attacked and scorched several villages surrounding Mahbere Dego, in central Tigray; whereas on 28 November 2020 Eritrean forces summarily executed several hundred residents in Axum, including shooting civilians in their homes;
 - E. whereas, according to international human rights organisations, there have been several incidents of indiscriminate killings of civilians in different parts of Tigray since the beginning of the conflict, including the massacre of 9 November 2020 in Mai-Kadra, where the killing of hundreds of civilians could amount to war crimes, the bombing of the market place in Edaga Selus on 22 June 2021, which killed dozens of people, and the murder of three staff members of Médecins Sans Frontières outside Abiy Addi on 25 June 2021;
 - F. whereas rape and other sexual violence against women and girls continue to be widely

used by Ethiopian, Eritrean and Amhara regional armed forces in addition to death threats, the use of ethnic slurs, and capture in conditions of sexual slavery; whereas government forces and officials have harassed and threatened humanitarian organisations and national health providers which support survivors of sexual violence;

- G. whereas throughout the conflict, humanitarian workers have been threatened and attacked, with the UN reporting the deaths of 23 aid workers since November 2020; whereas the Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) raided Unicef offices in June 2021, including the dismantling of critical humanitarian aid communication equipment; whereas warring parties, notably Eritrean government forces, have deliberately attacked and occupied medical facilities; whereas imposed logistical constraints and unjust bureaucratic impediments for aid workers have further delayed the provision of critical supplies into the Tigray region; whereas on 30 September 2021 Ethiopia expelled seven senior UN officials, a move that was strongly condemned by the UN and the international community;
- H. whereas given that the delivery of humanitarian supplies remains heavily constrained, the number of food-insecure people is increasing, also as a result of desert locusts and a poor harvest, with at least 5.2 million people targeted for emergency food assistance and 400 000 people living in famine-like conditions; whereas the UNHCR estimates in 2021 a financial requirement of USD 99 million for the emergency in Ethiopia;
- I. whereas indiscriminate shelling and strikes on urban areas have taken place throughout the conflict, notably striking homes, hospitals, schools and markets, forcing thousands of civilians to flee their homes; whereas since April 2021 there have been reports of Amhara regional force militias forcibly displacing civilians in Western Tigray with killings, mass arrests, torture and ill-treatment, sexual violence, and the pillage of crops, livestock and property, something the US Secretary of State has declared an act of ethnic cleansing;
- J. whereas following the withdrawal of Ethiopian federal forces from parts of Tigray in June 2021, Ethiopian authorities have arbitrarily detained and forcibly disappeared ethnic Tigrayans in Addis Ababa; whereas, according to international human rights organisations, Tigrayan residents elsewhere in the country have been suspended from their jobs and prevented from flying outside Ethiopia; whereas there are reports of physical and digital surveillance, mass arbitrary arrests and detentions;
- K. 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;
- L. whereas the EU's development cooperation with Ethiopia is one of the largest in the world, amounting to EUR 815 million for the 2014-2020 period; whereas Ethiopia is also one of the major beneficiaries of the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, receiving over EUR 336 million for 2015-2019; whereas in 2020 the EU provided EUR 53.7 million to humanitarian projects in Ethiopia, supporting the provision of life-saving assistance to internally displaced people uprooted by violence or natural hazards, including EUR 11 million specifically for the Tigray region;
- 1. Strongly condemns the ongoing violence and serious breaches of fundamental human

rights in Ethiopia and the Tigray region; deplores the current armed conflict between the federal government of Ethiopia and its allies, including Eritrean forces, and the regional administration of Tigray led by the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front; calls on all parties to commit to an immediate ceasefire and engage through democratic means in order to find a lasting peaceful solution, establish a ceasefire monitoring mechanism, and work towards building national consensus through an inclusive dialogue;

2. Expresses solidarity with the victims and the families of those affected by the violence; deplores the loss of life and killing of innocent civilians and the extrajudicial killings; calls on forces on all sides to respect international human rights and international humanitarian law and to ensure the protection of people in affected areas; recalls that deliberate attacks against civilians constitute war crimes and that those suspected of criminal responsibility must be brought to justice in open, accessible civilian courts in full compliance with international standards; calls for those suspected of committing rape or sexual slavery to be investigated for such war crimes and crimes against humanity as rape, sexual slavery, torture and persecution;
3. Urgently demands that all national, regional and local actors concerned allow immediate and unhindered humanitarian access and relief to affected populations in Tigray, ending the de facto blockade on the region, and allow humanitarian assistance and critical supplies, including food, medicine and fuel;
4. Deeply regrets the decision of 30 September 2021 by the Government of Ethiopia to expel senior UN officials and calls on it to reverse this decision immediately; expects the Ethiopian Government to provide humanitarian organisations with immediate and unrestricted access to conflict-affected regions in order to ensure humanitarian aid;
5. Calls on the Ethiopian authorities to provide immediate and adequate assistance, including medical care, food and shelter, to the thousands of Eritrean refugees and asylum-seekers displaced from camps in Tigray and in Addis Ababa, and to work with the Eritrean authorities and UN officials to determine the fate and whereabouts of thousands of unaccounted Eritrean refugees;
6. Reminds all parties to the conflict in Tigray, and to the wider conflict in the Amhara and Afar regions, of their obligations to act in full compliance with international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including refraining from targeting peoples' livelihoods and attacking civilian property, and to thoroughly investigate and prosecute those responsible for the abuses; calls on all sides to allow unrestricted access to independent human rights monitors and investigators, including UN and African Union investigators;
7. Urges the federal authorities to immediately halt arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances and the profiling and targeting of Tigrayan communities throughout Ethiopia; calls on the Ethiopian authorities to take strong measures against ethnic profiling and to ensure the protection of ethnic minorities across the country; calls on the Ethiopian Government to implement reforms that protect human rights and guarantee equal access to government services and resources for all ethnic groups;
8. Remains highly concerned about the growing spread of misinformation and the use of hate speech; calls on all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from using

inflammatory language and hate speech; urges national and local authorities, media organisations and the public to refrain from engaging in incitement to violence towards and discrimination of populations at risk;

9. Calls on Ethiopia's neighbouring states, and Eritrea in particular, to refrain from all political and military interventions that contribute to the conflict; emphasises that failure to do so risks destabilising the wider region with disastrous consequences for international peace and security; calls on Ethiopia's neighbouring states to play a proactive role in providing diplomatic support towards de-escalation of the conflict;
10. Welcomes the diplomatic efforts of the VP/HR and the Commission in calling for unhindered humanitarian access, condemning abuses by all parties and urging accountability; regrets, however, that Member States have so far prevented the adoption of more forceful and effective measures; calls on the Member States to act decisively at the Foreign Affairs Council meeting of 18 October 2021 in adopting the necessary measures to effectively address the seriousness and urgency of the situation on the ground;
11. Calls on the Council to adopt an arms embargo halting the transfer and sale of arms and all other military equipment to Ethiopia and Eritrea; calls on the Council, as a matter of urgency, to adopt targeted sanctions against individuals and entities associated with the Ethiopian Government, government or federal forces, the Amhara regional government, regular or irregular forces, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front, the Eritrean Government or forces responsible for serious human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law in Tigray, including for obstructing humanitarian access to all areas in the region;
12. Regrets that the UN Security Council has so far failed to address the situation in Tigray and to formally add it to its agenda; calls for the EU and its Member States to continue playing a proactive role in the UN Security Council to ensure unhindered humanitarian access, advance the protection of civilians, bring an end to the serious violations of international law, and ensure accountability for these atrocities; requests that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights hold an intersessional briefing at the UN Human Rights Council on Tigray in order to present the findings of the report of the OHCHR-Ethiopian Human Rights Commission joint investigation; stresses that the joint investigation should help lay the foundation for a robust international investigative mechanism to be established by the UN Human Rights Council as a matter of urgency;
13. Urges EU and Member State leaders to prioritise the human rights and humanitarian situation in Tigray and northern Ethiopia during the forthcoming African Union-EU summit and Leaders' meeting, and to cooperate closely with all international partners to provide coordinated humanitarian assistance and take action against those responsible for human rights violations;
14. 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 Government of Eritrea, the Tigrayan authorities, the

Government of the Republic of Sudan, the governments of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union and its member states, the Pan-African Parliament, and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.